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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

RECREATIONAL AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES OF THE SUMERIAN AND HITTITE CIVILIZATIONS

by

© DONALD F. MEIKLE

A THESIS

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The undersigned certify that they have read and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies for acceptance, a thesis entitled "Recreational and Physical Activities of the Sumerian and Hittite Civilizations", submitted by Donald F. Meikle in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

ABSTRACT

The primary purpose of this thesis was to study the games and physical activities of the Sumerian and Hittite civilizations as seen from the literary and archaeological evidence, and to relate them, where applicable, to their ecology, social organization and world view. Each activity was described against the background of the social and cultural institutions of each civilization.

With barely one hundred years separating the fading of the Neo-Sumerian civilization and the emergence of the Hittites of the Old Kingdom, it is not surprizing that one finds so many activities common to both civilizations. The following physical activities are those represented on the monuments of both groups: equestrianism, chariotry, hunting, festivals, music and dancing, boxing and wrestling, boating and board games.

Those activities which were represented only in Hittite art were falconry, acrobatics, animal training, gladiatorial combat, and swimming, indicating a growing sophistication in leisure time activities. The only activity found in Sumerian art and not common to Hittite art was bull wrestling. However, this apparent absence of one or more activities in either civilization should not be construed to negate the possibility that it was unknown within that culture group.

The following hypotheses were examined:

1. That the preponderance of physical activities of the Sumerians and Hittites were associated with warfare.

2. That the physical activities of the Sumerians and Hittites were predominantly activities of the upper classes.

Both hypotheses were supported by considerable historical and archaeological evidence, but one must not assume that all games were related to warfare, or that all games were enjoyed only by the upper classes. As the total evidence is incomplete, the hypotheses cannot be totally accepted. Indeed, all that can be derived from the existing art forms is some insight into those games enjoyed by royalty and the nobility, and one may assume that a large variety of them were enjoyed by the public at large in their everyday lives.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

> No one can comprehend contemporary physical education who has no concept of the social forces, conditions and movements, the play of ideas and the philosophies that have come out of the past to shape the institutions of the present day. History brings distant times and conditions into focus to help us evaluate our modern heritage. Similarly it helps illuminate and identify approaching guide posts.[1]

Darkness veils the cradle of civilization, and human life and human institutions can be better understood by - and indeed cannot be better understood without - a study of the life of primitive peoples. Play patterns are an integral part of all human cultures wherever man is found and in whatever state of culture. Even though anthropologists have long been aware of the role of physical games and sports in all cultures, one cannot find any comprehensive treatment of the topic in anthropology text books.[2] It would be unfair to say that sociologists, anthropologists and historians alike feel that it is unimportant to study man as an individual engaging in physical activity. Rather, the neglect is because this aspect is of peripheral rather than central interest to the scholars in these fields.

Play patterns established in a distant past have played a large and important role in the civilizing process of man, being activities

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[1] D.B. Van Dalen, E.D. Mitchell and B.L. Bennett. A World History of Physical Education, (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall Inc., 1953), p. 1.

[2] F.M. Henry. "Physical Education - An Academic Discipline", Journal of Health, Physical Education and Recreation, (Sept. 1964), p. 69.

with broad meanings in determining man's ideals and behavior characteristics. Analogy is indispensable for the interpretation of the behavior of other human beings.[3] Mesopotamian mud-and-reed architecture, still utilized today, has been useful in the interpretation of ancient Mesopotamian architecture. Similarly, the use of primitive reed boats, which were in use 5,000 years ago, are still common in this part of the world. Could it also be that some of the best constructive aspects of play, which had their origins in these ancient times, have been perpetuated by all succeeding generations to play an indispensable role in determining the culture of the times? It has been suggested by Huizinga[4] that play rather than work was the formative element in human culture: that man's most serious activity belonged to the realm of make-believe. Mumford writes:

> Long before he had achieved the power to transform the natural environment, man had created a miniature environment, the symbolic field of play, in which every function of life might be refashioned in a strictly human style, as in a game.[5]

The fact that many of the popular recreation activities engaged in today are similar to those of ancient man is evidence that play in its various forms is, and always has been, a definite and inseparable part of every culture and every educational process for complete socialization.

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[3] L. Mumford. The Myth of the Machine: Technics and Human Development, (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World Inc., 1967), p. 22.

[4] J. Huizinga. Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play Element in Culture, (Boston Beacon Press, 1968), Chapt. I, pp. 1-27.

[5] Mumford, op. cit., p. 8.

Games of all people bear striking similarities and are only different insofar as environmental and social forces are different. Societies use games to establish their patterns of folkways, customs and mores. They have always meant more to people than just a way of exercise.

In the historian's quest for new knowledge concerning the character of ancient cultures, he soon comes face-to-face with the unknown due to the fragmentary literary and artistic evidence. However, since the beginning of the present century, the charting of these ancient horizons, and investigations into the language, script, religion, art and culture of the Hittites and Sumerians have been intensified and have shown a steady development.

It may well be asked whether such obscure communities, whose history and art died out nearly 4,000 years ago, deserve such a literary resurrection. Perhaps the real criterion of value is how far have these people contributed to human progress, and what part had they in forming that culture which is the heritage of the world to-day.[6]

Firstly, we can consider both as civilizations which evolved naturally from life means and skills of the settled communities of the Neolithic and Mesolithic Ages. For the first time in the history of the western world, man now pursued knowledge and the arts, as well as a high level of political organization, a complex social order, and true specialization in crafts and various skills.[7] In a society most, if not all, of these elements depend for their development on a margin of security

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[6] L. Woolley. The Sumerians, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1928), p. 183.

[7] Ibid., p. 49.

and leisure that comes only with the evolution of the village into the town and the town into the city.

Man's creative genius first showed signs of blossoming within the Sumerian cities, which grew along the fertile banks of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers; the Old Testament's "land of Shinar".[8] From the stand-point of science and invention the formative period between 4500 and 2900 B.C. was one of the most fruitful phases of human history.[9] Out of it came outstanding contributions in the fields of technology, science, architecture, law and religion: the wheel,[10] the first use of metal in quantity[11] and the world's first known writing.[12]

Each year the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers would inundate the land, rendering the plain between them a fertile valley.[13] In an attempt to prevent the desert from encroaching on the sown land, a complex system of irrigation arose on which their prosperity came to be based. Being relatively unprotected by natural topography, the Sumerian lands were subsequently more subject to intercine strife and foreign invasions, their bellicose neighbour's being envious of their abundant water supply.

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[8] Genesis 10:10.

[9] "The Epic of Man", Life, Time Incorporated, New York, 1961, p. 67.

[10] Woolley, op. cit., p. 187.

[11] Ibid., p. 42.

[12] L. Cottrell. The Land of Shinar, (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1965), p. 186.

[13] D. Mackay. Ancient Cities of Iraq, (Bagdad: Mackenzie, 1926), p. v.

Warfare, therefore, was common place.

Despite its evils, warfare stimulated the Sumerian's technological development. Early metallurgy grew largely out of the demand for weapons, and the development of the war-chariot furthered the perfection of the wheel.

In the matter of scientific achievement it is probably in the field of mathematics that the Sumerians made their major contributions to future generations, with the development of the decimal and sexagesimal system,[14] traces of which exist even to-day in the measurement of the circle and angles by degrees.

From their earliest times the Sumerians used architecture as a major art form. They made use of the dome, vault and arch and it seems likely that these and other features were diffused over the ancient world.[15] The arch, for example, was not introduced to Europe until after the conquests of Alexander (356 - 323 B.C.), but can be dated to Ur in approximately 2000 B.C. and even to some of the arched royal tombs of Ur c.a. 3500 B.C.[16] Here then is a clear line of descent to the modern world from the dawn of Sumerian history.

Perhaps the greatest contribution of this civilization was the development of a written language, which had such a profound effect on the literary products of the entire Near East. One of the most characteristic features of the Sumerian city-state of the third millennium,

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[14] Cottrell, op. cit., p. 175.

[15] Ibid., p. 290.

[16] Woolley, op. cit., p. 191.

B.C., was their written law.[17] Written legal documents and law codes are found in later periods all over the ancient Near East, and there is little doubt that they can be traced back to the Sumerian prototype.[18]

It is generally agreed that even the earliest parts of the Bible were not written down in their present form much earlier than 1000 B.C., whereas most of the Sumerian literary documents were recorded about 2000 B.C.[19] The achievement of the Sumerians in the areas of religion, education and literature had a profound effect, not only on contemporary societies, but also on the culture of modern man. As the translations of Sumerian literary works are pieced together, close parallels with the books of the Bible can be drawn. In this connection the Hebrew debt to Sumer is recently becoming apparent, as traces of Sumerian influence are to be found in the stories of the Creation of the Universe, the creation of Man, and the Flood, to name a few.[20]

It would seem, then, that not even political extinction could put an end to their influence, which persisted for nearly fifteen hundred years after the Sumerians themselves disappeared. Woolley aptly expressed the importance of the Sumerian legacy when he said, "It is part of our own substance that they claim our study, and insofar as

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[17] S.N. Kramer. The Sumerians, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1963), p. 290.

[18] L.W. King. A History of Sumer and Akkad, (New York: Greenwood, 1968), p. 184.

[19] Kramer, op. cit., p. 291.

[20] Ibid., p. 290.

they win our admiration we praise our spiritual forebears."[21]

At the beginning of the second millennium, B.C., the principal civilized socieites located along the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers in Asia and the Nile in Africa had lived for more than a thousand years in nearly total isolation from each other.[22] This isolation was brought to an end by new, industrious powers, among them the Hittites of the Anatolian Mountains. These people helped promote an intermingling of cultures and the spread of the ideas of civilization. Nourished by urban life, the Hittites continued the development of the prime elements of human culture: science, art and the exercise of reflective thought.

Hittitology is one of the new branches of the science of archaeology. In slightly more than a century, a people of whom nothing but a name was known has become an integral part of the history of our civilization.[23] Much still remains to be learned about the Empire of the Hittites but a satisfactory beginning has been made.

These people were fun loving, lived well, and as may be noted from the art that remains, their kings were lovers of wine, women and song.[24] They, too, were a warring nation, who further developed metallurgy as the need for weapons grew, and who brought the versatile, two-wheeled war chariot to a state of near-perfection. They were a dynamic people

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[21] Woolley, op. cit., p. 193.

[22] "The Epic of Man", op. cit., p.121.

[23] C.W. Ceram. The Secret of the Hittites, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1956), p. v.

[24] Ibid., p. 213.

whose energies were bent on dominating and leading the heterogeneous tribes of Asia Minor. Theirs was a constitutional monarchy rather than an absolute monarchy;[25] a feudal system prevailed under which even the slave had rights;[26] and the social order was founded on a code of law which differed from all other known Oriental legal codes for its humaneness.[27]

Of these people Ceram wrote: "The Hittite Empire of the second millennium B.C. was the most splendid and amazing political phenomenon of ancient history".[28] However strong these words may seem in the light of discoveries in Greece and Egypt, one cannot help but wonder what might have come of this Empire if it had not been shattered by the wave of migrations that began in 1200 B.C.

The interpretation of written records of the Sumerians and Hittites has raised from oblivion the whole political, social, linguistic, religious and artistic culture of these great nations and to-day their history can be written and their art illustrated more fully than those of many ancient peoples.

The Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of this study is to examine the evidence of the

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[25] Ibid., p. 208.

[26] O.R. Gurney. The Hittites, (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1966), p. 70.

[27] Ibid., p. 93.

[28] Ceram, op. cit., p. 215.

recreational activities of the Sumerians and Hittites. Physical education reflects the very society that fosters it, and it is hoped that the collection and interpretation of the relevant material will assist in securing a basic understanding of their physical activities and the part played by them in the socializing process within each culture.

In order to understand the purpose of physical education within any culture it is necessary to be conversant with the cultural characteristics that bring them into existence. To this end, the pertinent political, economic, social and religious institutions of each civilization will be outlined to give an overview of the total educational scene before proceeding to the description of the physical activities and their role in the daily lives of the people.

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses will be examined in this study:

1. That the preponderance of physical activities of the Sumerians and Hittites were associated with warfare.
2. That the physical activities of the Sumerians and Hittites were predominantly activities of the upper class.

CHAPTER II

SUMERIAN INSTITUTIONS

Origin

The first humans to settle in lower Mesopotamia were probably immigrants from southwestern Iran who arrived at the beginning of the fourth millennium B.C.[1] In their new habitations they introduced the economic techniques, social mores, and religious beliefs and practises which characterized the "peasant village" cultures developed in their former homelands.[2] Not long after the establishment of the first settlements by the Iranian immigrants there is reason to believe that the Semites infiltrated into southern Mesopotamia, both as peaceful immigrants and as war-like conquerors.[3] It was probably largely as a result of the fusion of these two ethnic groups, the Iranians from the east and the Semites from the west, and the consequent cross-fertilization of their cultures, that there came into being the first civilized urban state in lower Mesopotamia, the land that was later known as Sumer.[4]

It was in the course of political and military activities of the

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[1] S.N. Kramer. "Sumerian Religion", Forgotten Religions, ed. W. Ferm, (New York: The Philosophical Library, 1949), p. 48.

[2] J.H. Breasted. The Conquest of Civilization, (New York: The Literary Guild of America, Inc., 1938), pp. 3-46.

[3] Kramer, The Sumerians, pp. 59-66.

[4] Kramer, "Sumerian Religion", p. 48.

Iranians and Semites that they first came into contact with the Sumerians. In their first encounters there is little doubt that the Irano-Semitic forces, with their superior military technique, dominated the early Sumerians.[5] However, in the long run, it was the mobile, primitive Sumerians who had the advantage over their more civilized sedentary adversary.[6]

As captive hostages in Mesopotamian cities, and as mercenaries in the Mesopotamian armies, the Sumerian warriors learned what they needed most from the more advanced military techniques of their captors.[7] Toward the end of the fourth millennium, the Sumerians poured through the buffer states of western Iran and invaded Mesopotamia itself, where they took over as masters and conquerors.[8]

The Sumerian invaders were themselves far from secure in their new habitat, having to contend with bellicose neighbours, and it is hardly likely that the times immediately following the arrival of the Sumerian hordes were conducive to progress in the economic and technological fields, or to creative efforts in the field of art and architecture.[9] Only in the oral literary field does one have reason to believe that there was a marked creative activity on the part of the illiterate court

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[5] Ibid., p. 49.

[6] T. Jacobsen. "Early Political Development in Mesopotamia", Zeitchrift für Assyriologie, LII, (1957), pp. 91-140.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Ibid.

[9] Kramer, "Sumerian Religion", p. 48.

minstrels who improvised and composed the oral epic plays for the entertainment of their lords and masters.[10]

In the two centuries following this initial era of stagnation, transition and adjustment, the most creative period of the Sumerian civilization emerged. In the early third millennium the more stable elements of the Sumerian rulers emerged,[11] and a shift toward law and order became evident, leading indirectly to community spirit and patriotic pride.[12] The fusion of conqueror and vanquished was to lead to one of the most fruitful periods of antiquity.

Religion

The Sumerian civilization, then, was actually the product of the cultural and biological fusion of at least three ethnic groups: the earliest Iranians, the Semites and the Sumerians. It follows that the Sumerian religion of the third millennium B.C. was not a homogeneous Sumerian development, but contained elements taken from the preceding Iranian and Semitic peoples.

The centre of the cult was of course the temple, which, by the time of the Third Dynasty of Ur, had become a vast building complex.[13] To the Sumerians, the worship of "the gods" was not something separate

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[10] Ibid.

[11] Jacobson, loc. cit.

[12] Kramer, "Sumerian Religion", p. 50.

[13] Kramer, The Sumerians, p. 135.

from daily life. It was part of such life.[14] People like the Sumerians and Hittites were more dependent upon the "forces of nature" than modern civilizations. These ancient peoples were much nearer to primitive man than ourselves, and Henri Frankfort aptly expressed their outlook in his book "Before Philosophy", when he wrote:

> There is justification for the aphorism of Crawley; "Primitive man has only one mode of thought, one mode of expression, the personal". This does not mean (as is often thought) that primitive man in order to explain natural phenomena, imparts human characteristics to an inanimate world. Primitive man does not know an inanimate world.
>
> ... and in every phenomenon which confronts man - the thunderclap, the sudden shower, the eerie unknown clearing in the wood, the stone which suddenly hurls him as he stumbles while on a hunting trip. Any phenomenon may at any time face him, not as It, but as Thou.[15]

Cottrell further clarified primitive man's outlook when he stated that:

> If you have to deal with a man much more powerful than yourself, whom you cannot hope to defeat by physical force, you may be able to avoid his anger by propitiating him with gifts. It is much more difficult if you have to cope with the wayward whimsical ways of a woman. You may, if you are lucky, win her by pleading (prayers) gifts (sacrifice) or flattery (worship). It is significant that the earliest deities seem to have been female.[16]

And so it was with the gods and goddesses of Sumer. Supernaturalism flourishes most where man's control over his environment is least, and

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[14] Cottrell, op. cit., p. 155.

[15] H. Frankfort, et. al. The Intellectual Adventure of Ancient Man: An Essay on Speculative Thought in the Ancient Near East, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1946), pp. 5-6.

[16] Cottrell, op. cit., p. 157.

the Sumerians fought an unending battle with their environment. The Tigris and Euphrates rose unpredictably, flooding and destroying crops. Their land was subject to parching winds and torrential rains. Here, Nature made man feel to the full how insignificant he was, and the mood of the Sumerians reflected this. Their world view was not too deeply thought out, but nevertheless was highly practical in coping with these giant forces.[17]

From as far back as written records go, the Sumerian theologians assumed as axiomatic the existence of a pantheon consisting of a group of living beings, man-like in form, but super-human and immortal, who though invisible to mortal beings, guided and controlled the universe.[18] Every aspect of the lives of the Sumerian people was deemed influenced by one or more of these beings.[19]

Through every-day observation, the Sumerians realized that all their institutions and enterprises were tended and supervised, guided and controlled by living human beings; without them their cities would have crumbled and the desert would have encroached on their farm land. It followed, then, that the universe must also be tended and supervised, guided and controlled by living beings in human form.[20] However, the universe naturally dwarfed the sum total of Sumerian institutions and these living beings must obviously be far stronger than the ordinary

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[17] Frankfort, op. cit., p. 126.

[18] Ibid., p. 127.

[19] Kramer, "Sumerian Religion", p. 54.

[20] Ibid., p. 55.

Sumerian to organize such complex phenomena. It was to each of these beings that the Sumerians gave the term dingar - "god".[21]

By the middle of the third millennium, the Sumerians had scores of deities, many of which were secondary, being the families and servants of the major deities.[22] Many of them were actually worshipped throughout the year, with sacrifices, adoration and prayer.[23] To the Sumerian theologian, the deities constituting the pantheon were not all of the same importance or of equal rank. The four most important were the Heaven-god, An, the Air-god, Enlil, the Water-god, Enki, and the great Mother-goddess, Ninhursag.[24] They usually head the god lists and are often listed as performing significant acts together as a group; at divine meetings and banquets, they were given the seats of honour. On analogy with the political organization of the human state it seemed not unreasonable to assume that at the head of the pantheon was a deity recognised by all the others as their king and ruler.[25] The Sumerian pantheon was, therefore, conceived as functioning as an assembly with a king at its head.

A significant division set up by the Sumerian theologians within their pantheon is that between creative and non-creative deities. By

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[21] Ibid.

[22] H.R. Hays. In the Beginnings: Early Man and His Gods, (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1963), p. 56.

[23] Kramer, The Sumerians, p. 118.

[24] Hays, loc. cit.

[25] Kramer, "Sumerian Religion", p. 55.

far the most important deity, from the creative point of view, was the Air-god, Enlil.[26] From the earliest intelligible records he was known as "the father of the gods", "the king of all the lands", and was looked upon as being responsible for the abundance and prosperity of the land.[27]

Also of note is the importance of the Mother-goddess. The likeness between the productive power of a woman and that of nature, especially of the soil, was so obvious that the worship of woman and earth together was established very early.[28] It was probable, too, that the soil was first tilled by women and this would help account for the institution of such worship.[29]

The relationship of the Mother-goddess with the bull symbol is another interesting feature of Sumerian religion. Hays remarks that a bull cult would seem to have its home among pastoral communities, particularly as there is no trace of it in the Paleolithic period.[30] A virile bull deity is found in various parts of Mesopotamia and it is generally related to the Mother-goddess as a brother, son or consort. With pastoralism which is believed to have emerged from hunting, there is bound to be an emphasis on the male sex and it seems that the bull

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[26] Cottrell, op. cit., p. 157.

[27] Kramer, The Sumerians, p. 19.

[28] M. Rostovtzeff. A History of the Ancient World, vol. I, (London: Oxford of the Clarendon Press, 1923), p. 159.

[29] Hays, op. cit., p. 60.

[30] Ibid.

was an expression of male potency.[31]

As for the priests in charge of the cult, little more than the names of several of the more important classes is known. The administrative head of the temple was the sanga and his duties were, no doubt, to keep the temple buildings and finances in good order and to see to it that the temple personnel carried out their duties efficiently. The spiritual head was the high priest, the en as he is known in Sumerian.[32] He was chosen from time to time with special rites and his selection was a significant public event. Under him were a number of priestly classes of which only the names are known: the pashes, the lumah, and the ishib. In addition, there was a large group of singers and musicians.[33] Corresponding to the high priest was a high priestess in charge of groups of priestesses whose functions are unknown.

In addition to the priestly personnel involved in one way or another with the religious rights and ceremonies carried on in the temple, the temple must have housed a huge group of secular officials necessary to conduct its varied enterprises. The upkeep of a major temple in ancient Sumer must have required large revenues, and these were provided, no doubt, by gifts and endowments from the king and the ruling classes.[34] In the course of centuries, the temple became one of the major land

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[31] Ibid.

[32] Kramer, The Sumerians, p. 141.

[33] Frankfort, et. al., op. cit., p. 187.

[34] Mumford, op. cit., p. 176.

owners of the state; its serfs and employees numbered in the hundreds, perhaps thousands.

Kingship and Society

Kingship was, from the beginning, a religious phenomenon, the ancient king lists leaving no doubt that it was "lowered down from heaven".[35] From the beginning it combined both authority and power; the same qualities that Frankfort alluded to as attributes of the Sun-god after 3000 B.C.[36]

All kings exercised their extraordinary authority by "divine right", for the king was a necessary executioner of the gods' decrees, as well as the chief agent for establishing great collective enterprises such as the building of cities and canal systems.[37] Significantly, it was during the Third Dynasty of Ur -- a period of vigorous constructive activity -- that all the kings except the founder, Ur-Nammu, were deified.[38] It follows, then, that the concept of divine kingship was closely related to the vigorous public works programs of that period, in that it provided the necessary leadership for those huge undertakings.

Both to establish and maintain kingship an infusion of divine power and royal military power was essential. But the constant intercourse with Heaven necessary for the guidance of the king demanded professional

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[35] Kramer, The Sumerians, pp. 328-331.

[36] Frankfort, et. al., op. cit., pp. 52-54.

[37] Ibid., pp. 139-140.

[38] Mumford, op. cit., p. 176.

aid from priests, magicians and interpreters of dreams who, in turn, were dependent upon the king's secular power and wealth for their own status and office.[39]

The emphasis on unqualified power of command was in some measure a necessary reaction to the disorders and difficulties that multiplied with the growth of population. Regularity and security were now paramount in Sumerian society and the problems of regulating river flow and repairing flood damage, apportioning water for irrigation and storing food, were directed from the palace. As military leadership became a pressing need, kingship and all its privileges became an hereditary institution, and in the course of time the palace began to rival the temple in wealth and influence.[40]

Although there were a number of rich and powerful families who owned large estates, farmers, boatmen, fishermen, merchants, masons and smiths made up the majority of Sumer's population.[41] Travelling merchants carried on a thriving trade from city to city and with surrounding states by land, sea and river. A large number of them, it would seem, carried out these enterprises as private individuals rather than as palace representatives.[42]

The population, it seems, consisted of nobles, commoners, clients and slaves, and this immediately suggests a leisured class among the

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[39] Ibid.

[40] Kramer, op. cit., p. 74.

[41] Woolley, op. cit., pp. 115-119.

[42] Kramer, loc. cit.

upper strata. Oppenheim even suggests that with growing prosperity, and also for prestige purposes, the landed owners began to maintain "town houses" at nearby sanctuaries, and eventually moved their main residences into the agglomeration of dwellings that developed around the temple and palace complexes.[43] In this way the Sumerian urban society developed along with its leisured upper class and subordinated lower class.

The Sumerian city-state consisted of three parts. First, the city proper, which was walled, contained the temples, then the palace with the residences of the royal officials, and the houses of the citizens. Next came the "suburb" or "outer city" with its agglomeration of houses, farms, cattle folds, fields and gardens, all of which provided the city with food and raw materials. Third, in a number of cities, was the harbour section which was the centre of commercial activity.[44]

Apart from the temples and surrounding area, the city itself was not an attractive sight. Building was undertaken in a haphazard manner along narrow, winding streets. All buildings were of mud brick and either one, two or three stories. However, there is evidence that Ur, at least, had a public square where the interests of a pleasure-seeking public were met with promenades and feasts.[45]

Homes of the upper classes were often two-storied. The rooms on the ground floor consisted of a reception room, kitchen and lavatory, often with an elaborate drainage system, servants' quarters, and even a

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[43] A.L. Oppenheim. Ancient Mesopotamia, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964), p. 113.

[44] Ibid., p. 116.

[45] Kramer, op. cit., p. 88.

private chapel.[46] Below the house there was often a family mausoleum where the family dead were buried, although cemeteries outside the towns were not unknown.[47]

The economic life of the Sumerian city depended primarily on the highly-developed skills of farmers, artisans and draughtsmen.[48] In spite of the fact that Sumer was destitute of metal and stone and poor in timber, her craftsmen were among the most highly skilled in the ancient world, although it is not improbable that at least originally, many of them came from foreign parts to practice their skills in connection with the construction of temples.[49] In spite of the lack of wood, numerous Sumerian carpenters were engaged in the construction of furniture, boats, wagons, ships and chariots.[50]

Large farming estates were kept in efficient operation by constant borrowing of labour from one estate to another.[51] The men mentioned in this respect were described as of the erin or military class.[52] The construction of an intricate system of canals and reservoirs required great engineering skill and the cooperation of many men, and the irrigation

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[46] Breasted, op. cit., p. 131. Compare also Cottrell, op. cit., p. 134.

[47] King, op. cit., p. 26f.

[48] Kramer, op. cit., p. 90.

[49] Ibid., p. 101.

[50] Ibid.

[51] T. Fish. "The Sumerian City Nippur in the Period of the Third Dynasty of Ur", Iraq, vol. V, Part 2, (1938), p. 176.

[52] Ibid., p. 175.

they afforded the landscape made possible the growing of a large variety of cereals and vegetables.[53] Animal husbandry, also important to Sumer's economy, was the source of transportation, food and clothing.[54]

A relatively large quantity of the Nippur tablets are records of wool and of clothing, and there seems to be no doubt that woollen and clothing industries were of first importance in Nippur, if not in Sumer generally.[55]

The animal commonly used for transportation was the donkey; the horse, too, was apparently known in late Sumerian times.[56] The most useful of domesticated animals was undoubtedly the ox, the only draught animal that was more or less properly harnessed in those days.

The typical city enjoyed a level of prosperity slightly above the subsistence level.[57] However, real prosperity came to a Mesopotamian city only when it had in its midst the palace of a victorious king.[58] Then the spoils of war, the tribute of subjected cities, and the gifts of intimidated neighbours were added to the stores of the ruler and distributed among the hierarchy of the army and bureaucracy, thus raising the standard of living of the entire community. Slavery was a recognized institution and the evidence relating to two types -- those who belonged

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[53] Ibid., p. 165.

[54] Kramer, op. cit., p. 109.

[55] Fish, loc. cit.

[56] M. Oppenheim. Tell Halaf. A new culture in oldest Mesopotamia, (London: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1933), p. 154.

[57] Oppenheim, Ancient Mesopotamia, p. 117.

[58] Ibid.

to private persons and those owned by the palace and temple -- testifies further to the presence of a leisured class.[59]

A rather detailed law code began to develop circa 2700 B.C., and from this time every act of civil life was a matter of law.[60] There is evidence relating to laws which regulated marriage and family life -- around which the Sumerian community functioned -- loans of money, grain and live-stock, the regulation of interest rates and honest weights and measures, and the sale of fields, houses and slaves.[61] By the time of the Third Dynasty of Ur, the king was responsible for law and justice. His power in this respect was delegated to the ensi, the local rulers of the various city-states.[62]

In an urban community in which specialization was a significant feature, and in which a distinctive class society ranging from royalty to slavery was evident, one must assume that a significant amount of time was available to the upper classes, at least, to pursue a wide range of vigorous activites.

Sumerian society was an ingenious ecological, social and religious adaptation to a harsh environment. Pertinent information on their life-style has survived only because the people who lived in these cities were alert and articulate enough to understand, describe, and interpret the process. And, what is more, they succeeded in recognizing the problems

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[59] Oppenheim, Tell Halaf, p. 75.

[60] Woolley, op. cit., p. 93.

[61] Fish, op. cit., pp. 157-79.

[62] Kramer, op. cit., p. 85.

of urbanization and the relationship between the physical features of the city and environment, and the behaviour and ideological patterns of its inhabitants.

Out of this there developed a number of physical activities, many of which were directed towards warfare and reflected the underlying air of uncertainty surrounding this civilization. These activities, it seems, formed such an integral and important part of their lives that they were represented on their monuments.

CHAPTER III

SUMERIAN PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES

> In certain archaic forms of warfare the play element finds immediate and, comparatively speaking, more pleasant expression. We are once more dealing with that same sphere of archaic thought in which change, fate, judgement, contest and play lie side by side as so many holy things. It is only natural that war too should fall under this head. One wages war in order to obtain a decision of holy validity. The test of the will of the gods is victory or defeat. So that instead of trying out your strength in a contest or throwing dice, or consulting the oracle, or disputing by fierce words -- all of which may equally well serve to elicit the divine decision -- you can resort to war.[1]

Warfare was an integral part of the lives of the Sumerian people from the time they swept on to the plain between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. One may assume, therefore, that a large number of their physical activities were related to warfare, and in their quest for survival, occupied a large part of their time.

However, the question of why warfare developed as an integral part of these ancient civilizations still remains. On this question Lewis Mumford wrote:

> Those who attempt to impute war to man's biological nature, treating it as a manifestation of the ravenous 'struggle for existence', or as a carry-over of instinctive animal aggression show little insight into the difference between the fantastic ritualized massacres of war and other less organized varieties of hostility, conflict and potentially murderous antagonism. Pugnacity and rapacity and slaughter for food are biological traits, at least among the carnivores: but war is a cultural institution.[2]

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[1] Huizinga, op. cit., p. 91.

[2] Mumford, op. cit., p. 26.

In the earlier stages of neolithic culture, there is still not even a hint of armed combat between villages: possibly even the massive walls around ancient towns performed a religious function before they were found to furnish a decided military advantage.[3] In the neolithic diggings, weapons are conspicuous by their absence, although pots and tools are not lacking.[4]

War, it would seem, was directly limited by the basis of subsistence, since a campaign involving long marches and weeks or even months away from the home city would necessarily involve a detailed knowledge of logistics.[5] People still in the hunting and gathering stages of ecological development could not have coped with such an enterprise and therefore lived in peaceful co-existence. The fact that the original cities of Sumer were often less than a dozen miles apart seems to argue for their having been established in a period before such closeness would provoke antagonism.[6]

Warfare in itself implies a degree of political organization under a central figure before large armies can be mustered. It seems likely that with the development of large urban centres and the division of labour, the consequent emergence of kingship provided the impetus needed for the development and maintenance of these large forces. The power

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[3] Ibid.

[4] Breasted, op. cit., p. 24ff.

[5] For insight into this problem see A.H. Burne. "Some Notes on the Battle of Kadesh", Journal of Egyptian Archaeology, VII (1920), pp. 191-5.

[6] Mumford, op. cit., p. 217.

concentrated in kingship increased rather than diminished and produced a reliable source of fresh crisis in the institution of war. Everywhere war took precedence over even hunting, as the dominant activity of kingship,[7] and numerous references are made to these city rulers marching out at the head of heavily armed troops marshalled in a massive phalanx, or charging the enemy in heavy chariots.[8]

As man escaped from the constraints of his subsistence economy his world began to expand, its internal balance became less stable and kingship developed out of a need for a more ordered existence.[9] Military organization had another sacred duty to perform: that of protecting the king against reprisals by anticipating the enemy's attack. In this development the extension of military power soon became an end in itself.

Among the lower classes much time was devoted to digging and maintaining the complex irrigation system, a task that would have demanded almost superhuman effort and endurance and would not have been undertaken for purely mundane purposes. Perhaps toward some religious end, this systematic daily work served to keep in check the unrestrained energies of the lower classes.[10] However, among the governing classes, no such restraint existed. With leisure time to spare, war gave them "something to do."[11] As with canal digging, warfare offered its share

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[7] Ibid., p. 178.

[8] Breasted, op. cit., p. 132.

[9] Oppenheim, Ancient Mesopotamia, p. 102.

[10] Mumford, op. cit., p. 221.

[11] Ibid.

of hardship, and thus the two were equated as being carried out in the service of the gods. Sumerian cities which had once lived peacefully almost within sight of each other now became potential enemies.[12] When the towns-people of one city heard that a neighbouring city kingdom was trying to take possession of a strip of their land, they were glad of the leadership of the king and nobility in order to drive out the invaders.[13] As such occurrences were common, the early history of Sumer was largely made up of the ever-changing fortunes of the city-kingdoms in war.[14]

In the advance of civilization the lead was generally taken by military science and equipment. In the case of the Sumerians, set down in the midst of peoples who were physically more powerful and addicted to war as a pastime, intellectual and artistic superiority would have made little progress unless it was directed to war. These people built an empire because they had a better army and better weapons than their neighbours, and throughout their annals war played a very large part.[15]

A most notable monument combining history and religion in its commemoration of a notable feat of arms is the Stele of the Vultures (Figure 1). It represents the victory won by King Eannatum of Lagash over the neighbouring town of Umma and comprises a summary of the course of the battle. The two sides of the stele give complementary versions

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[12] Ibid.

[13] Breasted, op. cit., p. 133.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Woolley, op. cit., p. 50.



Figure 1: The Sumerian phalanx.

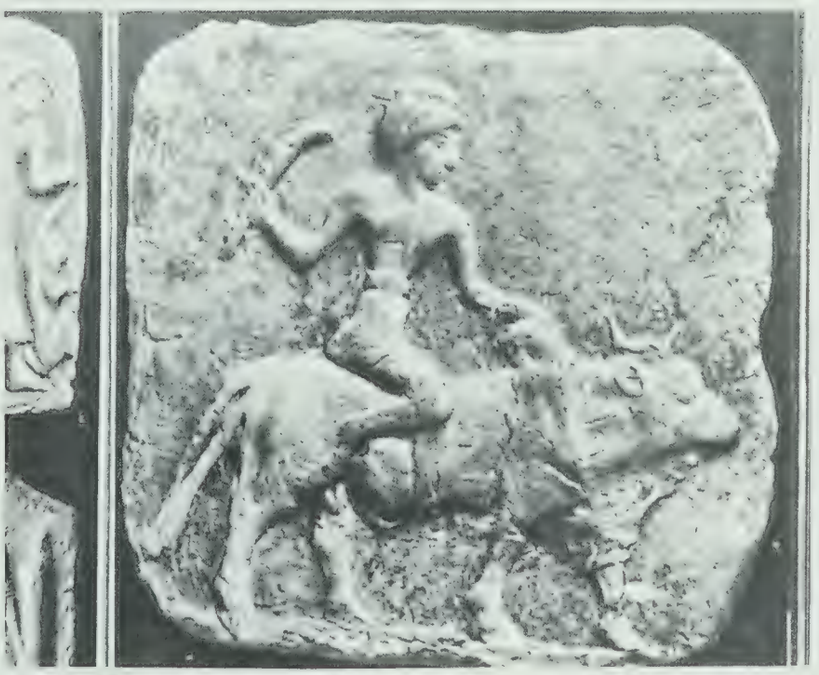
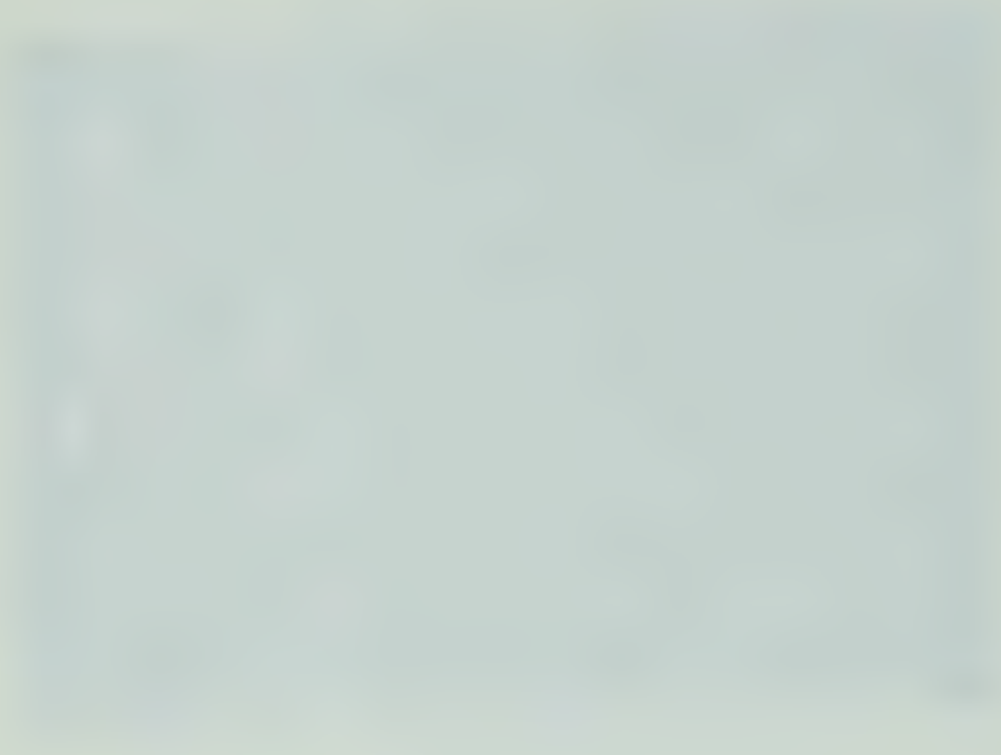


Figure 2: A peasant riding a humped-ox



of what happened: on one, the exploits of the warriors; on the other the decisive intervention of the gods.

The most important innovations in battle technique were the chariot and the phalanx. The use of the phalanx (Figure 1) reached an early peak of regimentation under the Sumerians.[16] This illustration depicts the leading rank protected by huge shields which covered each of the bodies from neck to feet, and were so broad that when lined up in battle array only enough space was left for a lance to be levelled between each; the lance-bearers carried, as an additional weapon, an axe resembling an adze with a flat head. The huge shields were only borne by the men in the front rank, and thus they served to protect the whole front of an attacking force as it advanced in solid formation. In the scene in the upper register (Figure 1), two soldiers are sculptured behind each shield, and in each gap between the shields six lances are seen protruding, held firmly in both hands by the soldiers wielding them. The massing of the lances in this fashion is obviously a device of the sculptor to suggest six rows of soldiers advancing one behind the other to the attack. The fact that each lance is represented as grasped in both hands by its owner suggests that the shields were not carried by the lance-bearers themselves, but by the soldiers stationed in the front, armed only with an axe. The sole duty of a shield-bearer during an attack in phalanx was clearly to keep his shield in position, which was broad enough to protect his own body and that of the lance-bearer on his right. Thus the representation of two soldiers behind each shield

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[16] King, op. cit., p. 137.

is a perfectly accurate detail. With each successive row of soldiers the spears must have been slightly longer than those held by the warriors of the preceding row. Only in this way could the spears of the soldiers in the back row have protruded an equal distance beyond the shields at the front. Certainly there is justification in calling this "machine" a "pedestrian tank",[17] seen as grinding over the fallen bodies of the enemy.

Many hours of training must have been spent before a phalanx of no less than thirty-six men could move as one and function efficiently under stress on the battle-field. Suitable only for combat on the open plain, one can imagine Sumerian warriors making use of the flat open ground beyond the city walls, practising the charge and wheeling left, then right, until perfect co-ordination and timing was achieved. It is not hard to imagine the destruction it could wreak when moving at speed through enemy lines before actually breaking formation and turning to hand-to-hand combat. This undoubtedly occurred after the initial attack had been successfully delivered and the enemy was in flight. The shield bearers would then discard the heavy shields and join in the pursuit. The light axe with which they were armed was admirably suited for such fighting, and it is probable that the lance-bearers themselves abandoned their heavy weapons and had recourse to the axe when they broke their close formation.[18]

The king is shown in one illustration (Figure 1) standing at the

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[17] Mumford, op. cit., Figure 18.

[18] King, loc. cit.

head of his troops, a thick protective hide draped over his body in such a way that it leaves his right arm and shoulder entirely free. In the lower register, light infantry march bare-chested, with their spears over their shoulders. Here again the king takes the lead, but riding now in his war chariot. He is armed with a long lance held in his left hand, and a curved mace or throwing stick, formed of three strands bound together at intervals with thongs of leather or bands of metal. He carried additional weapons which consisted of a flat-headed axe, and a number of light darts or arrows carried in a huge quiver attached to the front of his chariot. The use of such an array of weapons must have involved much training to achieve the high degree of skill, accuracy, and stamina required to use them under stress in battle.

Once the victory was theirs, the men of Lagash proceeded to count the dead,[19] and most important of all to provide a decent burial for them.[20] Sumerologists assume that this was followed by the epilogue of all successful wars: a scene of prisoners being led away into captivity. This, no doubt, was represented in the lowest register.[21]

The memorial had a religious aspect. To this, the other side of the stele was devoted. If Eannatum were victorious, and this is certainly suggested by the fallen bodies under the phalanx, it was only because the gods themselves came down and took a hand in the proceedings.

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[19] A. Parrot. Sumer, Trans. S. Gilbert and J. Emmons, (London: Thames and Hudson, 1960), p. 136.

[20] King, op. cit., Plate facing p. 138.

[21] Parrot, loc. cit.

Indeed, the fragments of the shattered stele that have been pieced together make it clear that a whole pantheon of gods threw themselves into the fray.[22]

Equestrian Pursuits

It has often been disputed whether driving or riding occurred first -- the taming of the horse as a beast of burden or as one of draught. Oppenheim[23] believes that, in all lands where everyday life means that man and other domestic animals live in close contact with one another, riding is the older of the two. This will be understood when one sees how even children in these countries to-day clamber up onto horses, cattle and buffaloes to ride them to their drinking water.[24] Figure 2, although from the late neo-Sumerian period (circa 1900 B.C.), illustrated this very point.

Riding is an obvious and natural activity, especially on unsaddled horses. The question remains, however, as to when the horse was first discovered in Mesopotamia. Woolley stated that it was not known there until 2000 B.C. or later.[25] Oppenheim, on the other hand, stated that the remains of mules and perhaps horses, dating to circa 3000 B.C., have been unearthed.[26] In Elam, pottery and cylinder seals of the

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[22] Ibid.

[23] Oppenheim, Tell Halaf, p. 154.

[24] Ibid.

[25] Woolley, op. cit., p. 50.

[26] Oppenheim, loc cit.

fourth millennium B.C. were decorated with horse designs,[27] and such is the case for the painted pottery of Upper Mesopotamia, circa 3000 B.C. Oppenheim considers this clear proof that there were horses at this time on Tell Halaf,[28] but one is justified in questioning his confidence in the anatomical correctness of ancient art. He believes that Upper Mesopotamia was the home of a specific kind of horse -- a small stocky animal which was a complete contrast to the bigger and more slender Arabian horse from which the former was bred.[29] From the representations of riding beasts from circa 3000 B.C. onwards it seems that both the wild ass and wild horse were used. Writing on this subject, Oppenheim stated:

> On our small orthostats there are, moreover, quite a number of riding beasts which recall sometimes a wild ass, sometimes a wild horse. The Tell Halaf sculptures of the Painted Pottery period probably meant to represent both kinds. The wild primitive horses and asses -- found still today [1931] -- are as a matter of fact more like each other than are the tame horses and asses.
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> The horse may have still been found wild in 3000 B.C., when the small orthostats were made; later it was undoubtedly only found tame.[30]

If the horse did exist in Sumerian times, it would be inconceivable that these industrious people did not import them through trade or booty from their various war ventures.

The ancient representations of the onager lead one to consider

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[27] Ibid.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Ibid.

whether or not the beast was ever domesticated, but it is not unreasonable to suppose that since this animal is depicted as harnessed to chariots for use in war as well as in agrarian pursuits, domestication had been achieved by the third millennium B.C.[31] One must not overlook the fact that much can be achieved by the provision of a proper diet and patient and sympathetic training, but in spite of this Oppenheim wrote:

> The occurrence of the horse on the painted pottery and on the Tell Halaf statues seems to me a further proof that the much debated question whether the beasts before the chariots in Ur are asses or mules (or horses) must be answered in favour of the latter suggestion. I should be astonished at the courage of the warrior who should dare to let his chariot be drawn into the fight by asses. The amusing mishaps of the sporting English officers driving asses in gymkhanas in Cairo show that asses cannot be properly driven.[32]

Chariotry

Although the domestication of the horse and onager was well known to the Sumerians, the harnessing of these beasts to the chariot was something out of the ordinary. However, the Sumerians did achieve it and their earliest fighting chariots in Ur, harnessed perhaps to onagers, can be dated to approximately 3000 B.C.[33] From this time onwards, chariots became of increasing practical value, and eventually played a

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[31] M.E.L. Mallowan. "A Copper Rein-Ring from Southern Iraq", Iraq, Vol. X, Part I, (Spring, 1948), p. 53.

[32] Oppenheim, op. cit., p. 157.

[33] Ibid.

prominent part in Asiatic warfare. It may be that the onager first gave the Sumerians the idea of accelerating the pedestrian pace at which they normally moved. The onager was, however, soon rendered obsolete by the introduction of the more easily controlled horse.

Most authorities writing on the subject of Sumerian chariotry describe the vehicle as being a heavy low-slung cart on four solid wheels. In support of this theory Ceram wrote:

> Assyriologists may argue that the Sumerians used a type of war chariot. The so-called chariot of that most ancient people were clumsy carts with four solid wooden wheels -- they are clearly depicted on the so-called "Mosaic standard of Ur" which Woolley dug up. Supposing that these carts were ever used in battle, they would only have provided moral support for the infantryman, like the ponderous vehicles of our Middle Ages -- elephantine wagons that lumbered into combat at a foot soldiers pace. It is far more likely, however, that these early Sumerian carts were merely a part of the supply train.[34]

True, the Sumerians did have heavy four-wheeled ox carts, but one must be careful not to confuse these vehicles with what the author believes to have been two-wheeled war chariots. Mallowan[35] believes that the idea of pivoting a chariot on a single axle had not occurred to the Sumerians. Again the present author believes that this may be an underestimation of Sumerian intelligence. Their technical skill was limited not so much in their ability to build a light two-wheeled war chariot, but in their ability to represent such a vehicle on stone or mosaics in the true perspective.

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[34] Ceram, op. cit., pp. 156-57.

[35] Mallowan, loc. cit.

Returning for a moment to the usual description of the chariot, one can observe that the wheels were solid, each being made of two pieces of wood clamped together and fixed to the axle which revolved with it. The tyres used seem to have been both of leather[36] and bronze.[37] However, the solid wheel was probably not more primitive than the spoked wheel, but was certainly more natural and much stronger.[38] In view of the absence of spoked wheels in Mesopotamia, one must consider, too, the lack of strong, straight trees in this region which would certainly have been necessary for their construction.

The body of the car was square, with a lower step at the back, lightly built with a wooden frame filled in with leather or wicker-work panels. The confusion regarding the use of two and four-wheeled chariots arises out of the protective front panel of the car, which is usually depicted as higher than the side panels and was surmounted by two round-topped shields between which was a V-shaped cleft. The purpose of this cleft was to guide the reins as they passed to the driver. On the "Standard" of Ur (Figure 3) the artist's inability to represent the true perspective of the vehicle is seen in this front protective panel being placed on the side of the car. The front wheel, which is seen directly under this raised panel, was probably located on the other side of the chariot, but owing to the artist's lack of technique he placed the two wheels side by side.

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[36] Woolley, op. cit., p. 52.

[37] Oppenheim, op. cit., p. 153.

[38] Ibid.

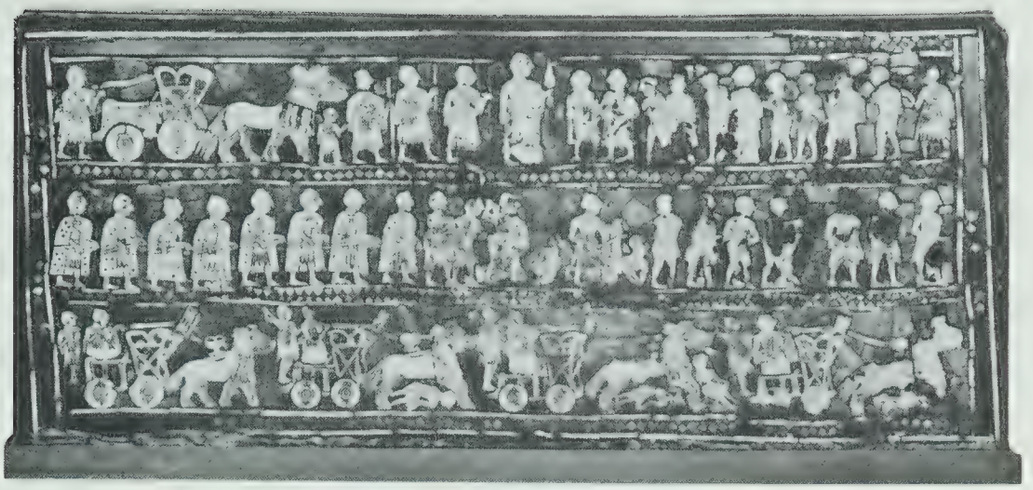


Figure 3: The "war theme" from the "Standard of Ur".



Figure 4: A war chariot carrying a driver, chariot warrior and wounded comrade. Note also the use of the rein ring and the high panel seen here at the side of the car.



If one assumes that these chariots were, in fact, of the four-wheeled variety, it is doubtful that they were ever of much practical use, in spite of the scenes which depict them as riding down the enemy. They would certainly have been a very cumbersome vehicle, needing a wide area in which to turn as they were attached to a rigidly fixed yoke-pole.[39] One wonders how they came to be represented as vehicles of war unless, perhaps, they were merely symbols of victory.

The two main panels of the "Standard" (Figures 3 and 12) illustrate two complementary aspects of existence, the dark and the bright side of life: on the one hand war; and on the other, a leisured peace. The blessing of peace could only be enjoyed to the full after the battle had come to a successful end.

On the "Standard", the theme of war is treated more elaborately than on the Stele of the Vultures, and on the former, the gods are dispensed with altogether. Credit for the victory has gone to the fighting men themselves. The episodes include the earliest known representation of a chariot fight, a type of warfare that must have introduced some sweeping changes into the old infantry tactics. Chariots were depicted on the Stele of the Vultures, but here for the first time one sees them in action; or rather, one is seen but represented four times at different moments being drawn into battle by its well-coordinated team.[40] To the left they can be seen advancing at a walk, and as one follows the frieze to the right, the chariots and onagers are seen progressing to a canter

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[39] Mallowan, loc. cit.

[40] Parrot, op. cit., p. 146.

and thence to a full gallop. Here are the first armoured cars in the history of warfare and also the first animated newsreel, for this attempt to depict progressive movement anticipates the motion pictures of today.[41] The chariots appear to be clearing the way for the infantry bringing up the rear. Helmeted soldiers in the middle register advance relentlessly, protected by heavy leather cloaks; all that remains for them to do is to round up the captives and drive them to the king who has alighted from his chariot and is waiting for them.

The method of harnessing the animals to the vehicle is evident in the lower register. The yoke-pole can be seen behind the horse's head and extending down to the fore-part of the chariot. Surmounting the pole is the rein ring, through which the reins were intended to be passed. However, in this case they appear to be inserted across the loops and not straight through them, but once again one must allow for the limitations imposed on the artist in his inability to render perspective.

The method of stopping the horses was clearly illustrated in the painting by Frederico Castellon (Figure 4). The reins were attached to a ring through the animal's nose and thence through the rein ring back to the car. A tug on the reins would draw the animal's head in and backwards, thus tending to draw them together and hinder their forward movement. Again, however, it is noteworthy that the chariot style, here depicted with four wheels and the high panel at the side, may have been

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[41] Ibid.

mis-represented.

There is also evidence that the chariot was specifically thought of as the special property of the gods and an emblem of power and authority. On the seals themselves, there is even more remarkable evidence that the chariot was a mythological emblem drawn by a winged dragon. A typical seal of this kind depicts a scene where the god of war rides in a chariot drawn by a fire-breathing winged dragon, on top of which stands a naked goddess dispensing lightning.[42] It is sufficiently clear, then, that the concept of chariotry was fundamentally associated with the gods, and the various kinds of cars discovered at Kish and Ur were put into the graves because they were the property of the gods.

It is evident, too, that people at this time felt that the gods were influential in the training of animals to pull these chariots. Oppenheim's book, "Tell Halaf", contains a photograph the subject of which is too badly scarred to reproduce in the thesis, but it is felt by him to be the most important chariot scene for cultural history.[43] It depicts a god holding a small chariot in his left hand and perhaps a bridle in his right. The untrained beast is rearing up in protest as the chariot and harness are being forced upon it. This suggests that not only had the Sumerians devised a method of training these animals, but that this, as with every other aspect of their lives, relied so heavily upon religion and could not be separated from it.

Significant changes must have been made to the construction of the

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[42] J.B. Pritchard. The Ancient Near East in Pictures, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1954), Fig. 687.

[43] Oppenheim, op. cit., Plate 20b, p. 152.

chariot between the estimated date of the "Standard" of Ur, (circa 3500 B.C.) and the Stele of the Vultures of the time of Eannatum (circa 2800 B.C.). Developments are also to be noted in art technique in the space of those 700 years. Eannatum's chariot (Figure 1, lower register) was two-wheeled and of much lighter construction, but now knowledge of perspective was sufficiently developed to illustrate the clefted protective panel at the front. Similarly, in Figure 5, the lighter two-wheeled vehicle is illustrated. The yoke-pole extends from the top of the body of the car in a high curve and then descends to the yoke itself. Its substantial insertion into the car would indicate that it was still rigidly fixed. The back of the chariot is high, possibly constructed of wickerwork, and is covered by a spotted skin. Protruding from the other side of the car at the front is a quiver filled with axes and spears. An attendant is seen walking behind the chariot -- possibly an overseer of the king's stables. He is seen awaiting his royal master's pleasure, indicating that, as will be noted with the Hittite society, the chariot was a mode of transportation for royalty and the upper class.

Chariot Racing

It seems highly improbable that an industrious people such as the Sumerians could develop a wheeled vehicle -- the chariot -- with a source of power -- the horse or the onager -- and not race it. There is archaeological evidence to suggest that a lighter form of chariot was developed for the higher speeds required for racing. Figure 6 depicts a copper two-wheeled chariot found in the temple at Tell Agrab.



Figure 5: A two-wheeled war chariot of the middle of the third millennium.



Figure 6: A copper two-wheeled quadriga.



Strommenger was of the opinion that this small object probably came to the temple as a votive gift.[44] Of this model Mallowan wrote:

> The bronze quadriga discovered in the Shara Temple of Tell Asman gives us a curious illustration of the beginnings of traction. A tiny chariot just big enough to accommodate a precariously balanced driver, was of strictly limited practical value: it was designed for speed and was symbolic of speed.[45]

Yet another opinion advanced by Pritchard which supported the chariot racing theory was that it may have served as a conveyance in peace-time,[46] probably the only time available for the pursuance of such an activity. He wrote of the quadriga:

> Though barely three inches high, this object nevertheless constitutes a unique piece of evidence for the history of transportation. A two-wheeled chariot is drawn by four animals, which are certainly not horses but are in all probability to be identified as asses or onagers. The animals are harnessed side by side, the two in the middle being joined by a yoke solidly locked to their collars. The reins are passed through a ring fastened to the upper lip of each of the four animals. The driver... holds the two central reins in his left hand; the slack is coiled round a centre piece made fast to the axle of the chariot. His right hand is left free and must have plied a whip or a goad (this accessory has disappeared). Since he is unprotected, this can hardly be a model of a war chariot like those presented in the Stele of the Vultures and the "Standard" of Ur. We are inclined rather to regard this quadriga as serving only for quick journeys over the steppes, the driver being both a courier and bearer of news.[47]

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[44] E. Strommenger. 5000 Years of the Art of Mesopotamia, (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc.), p. 393.

[45] Mallowan, op. cit., p. 55.

[46] Pritchard, op. cit., p. 152.

[47] Ibid.

The chariot would certainly have been ideal for cross country travel and perhaps even racing, with its solid, spokeless wheels. If racing were pursued in such vehicles, one cannot help but wonder how many animals were lost through strangulation in the course of the race. Child described the precarious harnessing technique depicted in the lower register of the "Standard" of Ur:

> The harness employed was that already devised to control the ox. But as these unfortunate equids do not possess broad shoulders like the ox, tractive power was transmitted to the yoke by a breastband across the animals' throat against which it had to pull. In doing so the wretched beast was half-choking himself. Despite the loss of power thus caused, the Oriental harness was copied wherever the horse chariot was adopted and was not finally reformed till the horse collar was invented in Dark Age Europe somewhere about the ninth century A.D.[48]

The only literary evidence pertaining to chariot racing is to be found in a version of the Epic of Gilgamesh, which Pritchard believed to be a copy of the original text, dated by him to approximately 2000 B.C. or perhaps slightly earlier:

> Thy he-ass in lading shall surpass thy mule
> Thy chariot horses shall be famed for racing
> [Thine ox] under yoke shall not have a rival.[49]

It seems, then, that chariot racing, even if limited in extent, did exist at this time, perhaps amongst the upper classes. Although there is no actual evidence as it occurred in the Hittite society, it is

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[48] G. Child. What Happened in History, (London: Penguin Books Ltd., 1942), p. 83.

[49] J.B. Pritchard. The Ancient Near East: An Anthology of Texts and Pictures, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1958), p. 52.



Figure 7: A copper rein ring.

entirely possible that a class of professionals emerged -- perhaps association with the palace complex -- who relied to a large extent, if not entirely, on its rewards for their living.

In reviewing Sumerian chariotry of the third millennium B.C. one could conclude that the chariot was originally a vehicle ordained to the service of the gods, who in themselves could command rapid motion and victory.[50] But these properties were soon harnessed to the service of man. Mallowan concluded:

> Indeed the little onager... reminds us that the ultimate ancestry of modern transport derives from an age when stock breeders and artisans in the Tigris - Euphrates valley were exploiting the power of the gods for the benefit of mankind.[51]

Hunting

Strangely enough, hunting scenes upon Sumerian monuments are noticeably lacking. However, those examples unearthed to date reveal that leadership and loyalty, those essential features necessary to military success and large scale organization, also flourished in this milieu. This is evident on the numerous cylinder seals depicting Gilgamesh and Enkidu in combat with wild animals. Here the traits of leadership, loyalty and cooperation are particularly noticeable. The origin of the king's unconditioned supremacy may perhaps stem from the hunt -- the hunt which cultivated initiative, self-confidence and the ruthlessness

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[50] Mallowan, loc. cit.

[51] Ibid.

that a king had to exercise to achieve and retain command. The unscrupulous use of the weapons of the hunt to control the political and economic activities of whole communities was one of the effective primitive inventions of kingship.[52] The mace, the weapon which had established this new rule of force, had appeared long before the war chariot and was useful not only for crushing the skulls of captured enemy soldiers (Figure 31) but also for disposing of a wounded animal with a single blow.

It is in the Epic of Gilgamesh that the hunting chief becomes eminent in civilized history. Mirrored in the exploits of Gilgamesh and his companion Enkidu, one sees the heights which Sumerian kings dreamed of emulating during their own hunting exploits. So far as can be determined, the feats of these super-human heroes were mythological, but it is tempting to think of the Sumerian scribes writing around a certain amount of fact. Of these mythological beings, Parrot wrote:

> The earlier theme of the two friends Enkidu and Gilgamesh fighting wild animals, is one of their favourites and they treat it with exuberance and even gaiety, for the triumph of the two heroes is always a foregone conclusion. They are more than slayers of wild beasts; they make sport with them and put them through paces of the most diverse kinds. Lions and buffaloes are no match for these Herculean athletes, who have no trouble in swinging them aloft or cracking their joints like matchsticks.[53] (Figure 8)

Animal husbandry and crop production were supplemented by hunting, and there are texts recording the deliveries of deer, wild boars and gazelles, confirming that hunting was in fact pursued in spite of its

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[52] Mumford, op. cit., p. 169.

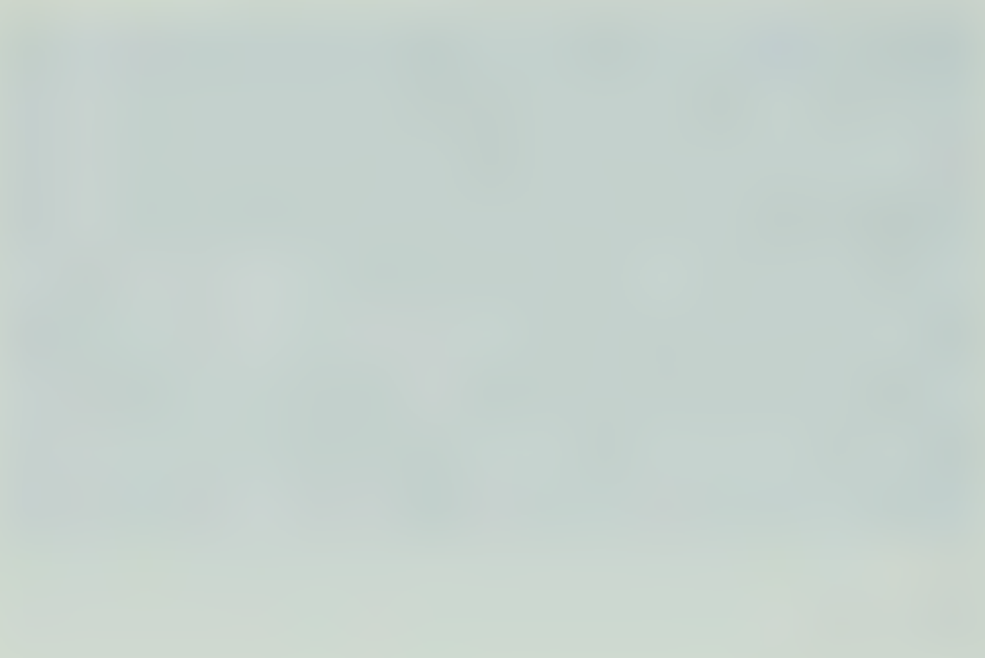
[53] Parrot, op. cit., p. 187.



Figure 8: Gilgamesh and Enkidu fighting wild animals.



Figure 9: The lion hunt stele.



absence on the monuments.[54] There was also the fowler who caught birds with a whole arsenal of nets, and there are recorded deliveries of as many as fifty-four roasted birds.[55]

Other weapons used were the lance and the sling, both of which must be considered to have preceded the bow as hunting weapons. Slings and small ammunition, together with larger throwing balls, have been found in the deeper layers of Tell Halaf.[56] It is certainly a primitive weapon and is still in use in the area to-day.[57]

On the "Standard" of Ur, no archers are represented. Similarly there are none on the Stele of the Vultures; they appear only on the Stele of Naram-Sin, an Akkadian monument, and it is argued, therefore, that the bow was not used by the early Sumerians, a conclusion apparently supported by Dungi's statement that in the time of the Third Dynasty of Ur, he enrolled the sons of Ur as archers.[58] However, in the graves, arrow-heads of many types have been found, and even fragments of decorated bows.[59] Woolley considered these to be military weapons, and if this were so one could assume the existence of a force of archers in the Sumerian army of the fourth millennium B.C. Additionally, the weapon could certainly have been used for hunting from that time.

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[54] Kramer, op. cit., p. 110.

[55] Ibid.

[56] Oppenheim, op. cit., p. 145.

[57] Ibid.

[58] Woolley, op. cit., p. 54.

[59] Ibid.

During the Sumerian period the hunting of wild beasts was as much a defensive measure as a royal sport;[60] the cattle needed constant protection from marauding lions, and shepherds were probably often called upon to protect the herd. Figure 9 illustrates what could possibly have been just such a situation, where two men are seen fighting off three lions. The man above is seen using a lance, while his companion below is shooting arrows at his quarry from a small but powerfully-constructed bow. If these beasts roamed the plains in any great number, the danger must have been ever-present, and it is probable that some form of practice was undertaken to ensure a successful kill by the hunter. However, as with all Sumerian physical activities, there is no literary or archaeological evidence to support this assumption, and if practise and competition arose out of the use of these weapons, it was in all probability a means to an end and not an end in itself.

Festivals, Music and Dance

The rich festive life practiced by the Sumerian people is attested by the numerous scenes depicting feasts, music and dancing. The evolution from prehistoric and primitive civilizations involved a corresponding evolution from folk and ritual instruments to instruments intended for entertainment and art.[61] These new and larger urban centres provided not only the numbers needed for large armies, but also a consequent

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[60] Parrot, op. cit., p. 75.

[61] C. Sachs. The History of Musical Instruments, (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1940), p. 67.

division of labour: carpenters, merchants, smiths and of course musicians. The division of labour and class distinction in Sumerian urban culture resulted in the formation of a professional class, or caste, of singers, dancers and musicians who, as members of the palace personnel, would have lived within the palace complex and relied on it for their living. It seems that they were called upon to entertain the king and nobility, perhaps after a successful harvest or a victory in battle.

Very few musical instruments have been excavated in Mesopotamia, and most of those found were in the royal cemetery at Ur. There are many reliefs, plaques and seals depicting banquet scenes, with musicians and dancers. Figures 10 and 11 are two such scenes. In Figure 10, two men are seen seated on stools partaking of the feast and drinking through straws. In the lower register a group of musicians consisting of a flutist, a lyrist, two other musicians and three dancers are clapping hands to the music. Pritchard considered this scene to be associated with a cult, and more specifically with the ceremonies of the ritual marriages.[62] He suggested, on the other hand, that the scene could depict a banquet for the dead,[63] which perhaps took place after a successful battle.

A similar banquet scene is depicted on the "Standard" of Ur (Figure 12). After the storm and stress of battle, a feast was prepared to celebrate the victory. Bearers and menials are seen conveying to the palace the spoils of war, together with the animals and supplies required for the banquet. The king has removed his battle dress and is seen in his

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[62] Pritchard, The Ancient Near East in Pictures, p. 220.

[63] Ibid.



Figure 10:

Figures 10 and 11: Cylinder seals depicting court banquet scenes.



Figure 11:



Figure 12: The "peace theme" from the "Standard of Ur".

peace-time kilt. While he and his guests enjoy the meal, a woman sings to the accompaniment of music from a lute.

Idiophonic instruments, consisting of percussion clubs, clappers, sistra and rattles are all present in the scenes. Pipes, too, are represented although infrequently; it would seem that the Sumerians preferred strings. Flutes were introduced into ritual music as late as circa 2600 B.C., as a cylinder seal of one of the Sumerian priest-kings reveals:

> Enlulim, the shepherd of the lulim-kids, for the Lord Ningirsu, was given a share in his cult to cultivate diligently flute [playing] to fill the forecourt of Eninna with joy.[64]

Some of the pipes depicted in Sumerian musical scenes must have required the use of a reed to emit the sound. Figure 13, which illustrates the use of double pipes, is a good example, since a mouth-piece is not evident. The position of the pipes is also misleading. Though they are supposed to project horizontally from the player's mouth, the molder of this rough clay figurine had modelled the pipes in the downward position of a flute, close to the body to avoid the difficulties of a projecting form. The use of this instrument, it seems, was not unusual at this time. The flute was a single pipe, hence these may have been oboes with a double reed, or perhaps clarinets with a single reed.[65] Geminated clarinets were always closely tied together without forming an

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[64] Sachs, op. cit., p. 71.

[65] Ibid., p. 72.



Figure 13: Terra-cotta figurine of a woman playing double pipes.



Figure 14: Fragments of silver pipes found at Ur.

angle; twin oboes were divergent, however,[66] and it would seem, therefore, that those depicted in Figure 13 belonged to the family of oboes.

The University Museum in Philadelphia possesses several slender, silver tubes with four finger holes in each (Figure 14). They were excavated from the royal cemetery at Ur and are dated to circa 2800 B.C. This indicates that these pipes were known in Sumer thirteen hundred years before oboes first appeared in Egypt.[67] Other wind instruments such as the horn are strangely lacking from the reliefs of the Sumerian period, but as will be seen they were depicted frequently on the monuments of the Hittites.

Only two drums have been found in Sumerian art work (Figures 15 and 16). Both are very large and stand on their sides on the ground. Reaching to the shoulders of a grown man, the skins must have been almost five feet in diameter, and perhaps were fashioned from the hides of bulls. Large nails holding the skin in place can be seen projecting completely around the frame. A rather unusual feature of Figure 16 is the small figure seen on the top of the drum and, although damaged, the remains of what could have been a similar figure is to be seen on the drum in Figure 15.

The artist has not represented the second skin or the solid body which held the two skins together, but as both sides are being struck by each player, it is likely that the drums were of a rather slim variety. According to Sachs, the literary sources do not describe the shape of

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[66] Ibid.

[67] Ibid.



Figure 15:

Figures 15 and 16: Musicians shown beating drums.



Figure 16:

either of these drums. However, on their various uses, he wrote:

> To begin with the best known name, balag, we learn that it came from a verb, bal, 'to beat', and its Akkadian equivalent was balagger. A second significance of balag is variously translated as 'gladness, joyful noise' or as 'cry, howl'. This drum [Fig. 16] in the temple of the god Ea, or En-Ki, who ruled water, exorcism and divination, and a special officer had to guard the sacred instrument... Its sound compared with "a bull's voice" in contemporaneous sources, accompanied ritual songs, summoned the sleeping god and was connected with divination, ...[68]

It would seem, then, that the larger drum's main use was in connection with warfare. Every balag had a proper name, and so important was this instrument to the Sumerians that they called a certain year in Gudea's time, "the year in which the balag ushumgal - kalam - ma was erected".[69]

As mentioned, stringed instruments, including the lyre and the harp, predominate in Sumerian art. The lyre, when depicted on art works of circa 3000 B.C., is seen resting on the ground. It seems that it first developed as a relatively large instrument before it developed as a truly portable one. They were maintained in a strictly vertical position, even when carried in the player's arms (Figure 12).

While most stringed instruments have a body and a neck, lyres have, instead, a yoke-shaped frame consisting of two arms and a cross-bar (Figures 17 and 18). These two illustrations show clearly the structure of this instrument. The former has been re-constructed and consists of

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[68] Ibid., p. 75.

[69] Ibid., p. 76.



Figure 17: A reconstructed lyre.

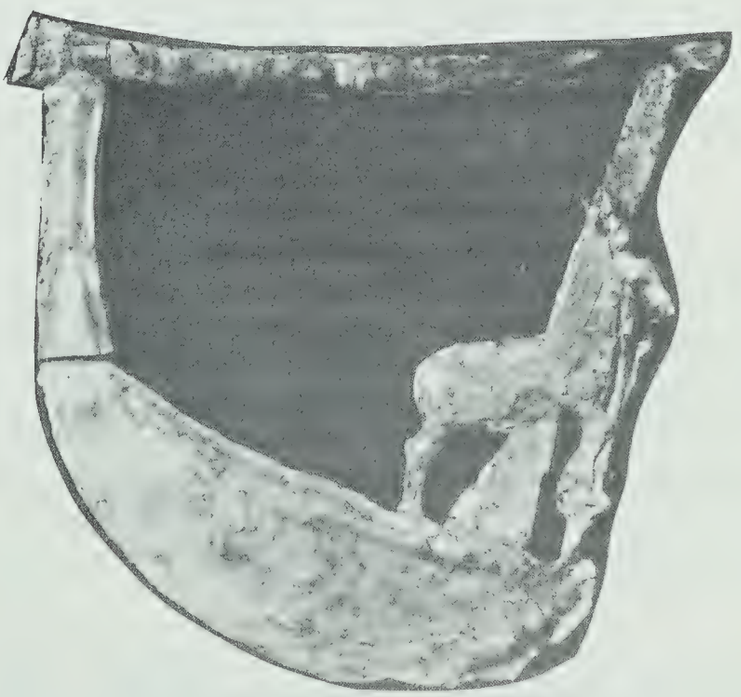


Figure 18: An unrestored silver lyre.

a sound box, ending in a gold head of a bearded bull, to which are attached the two uprights sheathed with bands of mosaic in shell lapis and red limestone, separated by bands of sheet gold. The strings were probably fixed at the bottom of the sound box, where there is a break in the design of the mosaic border, and then attached to the cross-bar at the top. It is also likely that there was a bridge at the middle of the side of the sound box over which the strings were passed.

Figure 19 depicts a group of musicians and several of the instruments already described can be recognized. In the top register, the two figures on the left could perhaps be using rattles and percussion clubs, respectively. They are accompanied by a pipe player and perhaps a drummer. In the lower register another musician is seen playing upon an eleven-stringed lyre and accompanying a singer to the right. The former is sitting behind his instrument and plucking the strings with both hands.

Harps, too, are seen frequently on mosaics and relief carvings and are always depicted as of the arched variety held with the frame to the body and the strings facing away from the body. An example is to be seen in Figure 11.

As has already been alluded to, dance, along with music, seemed to occupy an important part of the leisure time of the Sumerian people. Sachs has written that in the lives of primitive peoples, and in ancient civilizations, few experiences or communal functions approached the dance in importance.[70] It is not viewed as an activity that is external to

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[70] C. Sachs. World History of the Dance, (New York: W.W. Norton and Company Inc., 1937), p. 4.



Figure 19: A limestone fragment depicting a musician playing an eleven-stringed lyre.

survival: indeed, he wrote "...it provides bread and everything else that is needed to sustain life."[71]

> On no occasion in the life of primitive peoples should the dance be dispensed with. Birth, circumcision, and the consecration of maidens, marriage and death, planting and harvest, the celebration of chieftains, hunting, war, and feasts, the changes of the moon and sickness -- for all of these the dance is needed.[72]

Kennedy suggests that the religious aspect of dance generally had as its purpose communication with the unseen forces which provided food, promoted fertility, regulated the weather, gave good fortune in warfare and thus controlled tribal welfare and human survival.[73]

As Sumerian society became more complex and their world expanded, their dances probably no longer involved the simple telling of the hunt. Much more elaborate ideas had to be conveyed through gesture, and it is possible that as dancers appear on the majority of musical scenes, they too may have become a special class of performers.

Figure 20 depicts Ur-Ninna, "the great singer". If she is wearing pantaloons, the reason is that she was probably also a dancer and performed her sequences to the accompaniment of her songs. Though found in a temple, and probably a religious work, this statue suggests much about the court life of the period -- a life rich in leisure and variety, as already manifested by the range of elaborate musical instruments.

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[71] Ibid.

[72] Ibid.

[73] D. Kennedy. England's Dances, (London: G. Bell and Sons Ltd., 1950), pp. 31-32.



Figure 20: Ur-Nina, 'The Great Singer'.



Figure 21: Bronze pinhead of two dancing women.

Music and dancing were not confined to the king's court. Evidence of the general citizenry partaking in such activity is illustrated in the Sumerian poem "Love Finds a Way", which was probably intended to be recited to the accompaniment of the lyre, and which reveals the delights of a leisured courtship in the Sumerian era. Here are the poet's own words:

> Last night as I the queen was shining bright,
> As I was shining bright, was dancing about
> As I was singing away while the bright light
> overcame the night.[74]

Later in the stanza Dumuzi, her lover, says:

> My girl friend, she took me with her to the
> public square,
> There a player (?) entertained (?) us with
> dancing.[75]

The archaeological and literary evidence reveals that not all of Sumer's citizenry was engaged in the more serious game of war. It would seem that a class of skilled craftsmen were occupied in the experimentation with, and the manufacture of, a wide range of instruments for use by a class, or perhaps caste, of professional musicians. In order to master the more refined instruments, these professionals had to devote much time to bring their art to a state of perfection. Their lives revolved around entertainment, and revelry of the post-harvest or post-battle periods. It was then that people were able to engage in the merriment of the rich and leisured courtlife, and the gaiety of the public square.

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[74] Kramer, op. cit., p. 251.

[75] Ibid.

Boxing and Wrestling

Evidence of wrestling and boxing on Sumerian sculpture suggests that these activities were known in ancient Sumer, and may perhaps have been used as practise for the hand-to-hand combat so necessary on the battle-field at this time. Both were possibly pursued as recreational activities as none of the exponentents is depicted in anything more than a brief loin cloth, certainly not practical dress for a battle-field situation. Although there is no actual evidence to substantiate it, there is the possibility that such competition took place during festivals and perhaps palace banquets, a practise which is seen frequently in Hittite Art. Of these activities Speiser wrote:

> Wrestling and boxing, both of religious significance in ancient Mesopotamia were depicted on monuments dating from the first half of the third millennium B.C. Battles between heroes and demons were often portrayed. One wrestling bout involved the great Gilgamesh and his one-time opponent, Enkidu, who later became the heroe's inseparable companion.[76]

How better to describe the encounter than in the scribe's own words?

> They grappled each other
> Holding fast like bulls
> They shattered the door post,
> As the wall shook
> Gilgamesh and Enkidu
> Grappled each other
> Holding fast like bulls;
> They shattered the door post,
> As the wall shook
> As Gilgamesh bent the knee --
> His foot on the ground --

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[76] E.A. Speiser. "Ancient Mesopotamia: A Light That Did Not Fail", The National Geographic Magazine, XCIX, (January 1951), p. 48.

His fury abated
And he turned away.[77]

Contestants fought naked, except for a loin cloth around the waist. Figure 22 illustrates a boxing match in which the opponents are seen in the classic on-guard stance. One cannot say with any certainty whether padding on the hands was used.

In yet another scene (Figure 23) wrestling and boxing matches are being fought simultaneously. To the left are two groups of wrestlers, and to the right are two boxers. To the extreme left, one contestant, who stands firmly on the ground, grasps his opponent by the ankle and lifts the foot in his attempt to throw him. Another possibility suggested by Pritchard is that the three groups of two contestants each may represent successive phases of a single combat.[78]

Another unique representation of a wrestling match is to be seen in a bronze sculpture in the round (Figure 24). Once again the loin cloths are clearly evident as both contestants assume a wide stance with their centre of gravity low in an attempt to gain the advantage.

An unexplained complication in this encounter is the positioning of the jars atop the heads of the two combatants. Speiser suggests that they were there to present an extra hazard.[79] However, considering the exertions of those combatants in Figures 22 and 23, where the jars are absent, Speiser's suggestion seems unlikely, as the contestants would

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[77] Pritchard, The Ancient Near East, p. 50.

[78] Pritchard, Ancient Near East in Pictures, p. 68.

[79] Speiser, loc. cit.

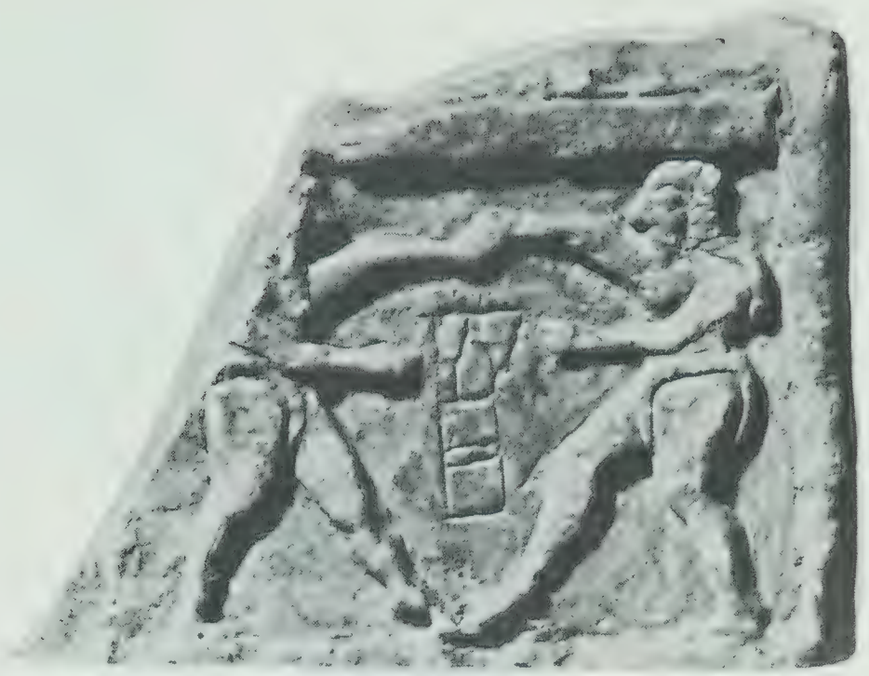


Figure 22:

Figures 22 and 23: Limestone votive plaques depicting boxing and wrestling contests.



Figure 23:



Figure 24: Bronze statuette of two wrestlers supporting vases.

be so pre-occupied in attempting the complex holds evident in the reliefs that the balancing of a large jar on the head would be impossible. As the sculpture was found in a temple a Khafaje it seems more probable that it was used for burning incense or oil. The wrestlers forming the base must have been purely decorative, a practise which is usual even to-day in the manufacture of such things as lamp bases and even jars.

Diem suggested that this type of wrestling may have been the forerunner of judo, and he based his assumption on the fact that each contestant is clutching his opponent's loin cloth, as is the practise in judo to-day.[80] However, if the wrestlers' bodies were oiled, as is often the case among primitive tribes, or perhaps dripping with perspiration, it seems that a wrestler would clutch at anything dry in order to secure a firm grasp.

In spite of the mystery which surrounds this small object, there is no doubt that both wrestling and boxing were pursued with great vigor by the Sumerian people. It is possible that as with musicians, a particular class, or caste, of professionals emerged who depended on these activities for their livelihood. Whether they were slaves who were owned and exploited by the upper classes to satisfy their own greed, or private citizens, the general attitude of the combatants and the number of holds depicted suggests, through their complexity, that much time and effort was devoted to perfecting these arts.

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[80] C. Diem. Welteschichte des Sports und der Leibeserziehung, (Stuttgart: J.C. Cotta'sche, 1960), p. 103.

Combat Against Wild Animals

A surprizing number of cylinder seals and plaques have been found depicting Gilgamesh and Enkidu engaged in combat with wild animals and one is tempted to dismiss them as being mythological. The possibility that men were put into an arena to defend themselves against these beasts should not be entirely discounted. Figure 25 depicts two men -- perhaps Gilgamesh and Enkidu -- in combat against two lions, an illustration which may have been motivated by a true-life incident. It is doubtful that a class of professionals would have emerged to pursue this activity, as a victory by a human contestant would have been infrequent. It is more likely that this spectacle was a form of religious sacrifice, perhaps in an attempt to appease the anger of the gods.

The exploits of the two heroes in the art of bull wrestling, however, seems to be based on more fact than fiction. On a cylinder seal (Figure 26) dated circa 3000 B.C., two men are seen attempting to wrestle a bull to the ground. While one grasps the animal's horns and struggles to turn it over, the other attempts to tether the beast by means of the ropes and nooses seen trailing from its horns. The former seems intent on slowing the galloping animal by giving it the added burden of his full weight. Such an activity would have required expert skill and judgment to avoid being trampled under the pounding hooves or gored by the apparently unsheathed horns, and it appears to have been an entertaining pastime embodying the excitement and element of danger of a modern rodeo or stampede.



Figure 25: Cylinder seal depicting two figures engaged in combat with wild animals.



Figure 26: Cylinder seal depicting two figures attempting to subdue and tie a bull.

Boating and Fishing

Boating obviously played an important part in the lives of the Sumerian people, as quite frequently one finds the typical Sumerian craft with high prow and stern depicted on the seal stones and cylinder seals. In their trade with surrounding urban centres, the rivers and tributaries of the Tigris and the Euphrates Rivers must have become the highways of Lower Mesopotamia on which merchants plied their small crafts between the numerous village landings.

There were also very large boats constructed of wood in special shipyards, and these were, no doubt, used for long sea voyages to such lands as Meluhha and Dilmun.[81] The common boat in use was the one known to-day in Iraq as the guffa and in ancient times as "the turnip". It was made of reeds covered with skin, and shaped like a basket.[82] The sailboat, too, was known,[83] and Kramer suggests that oars and punting poles (Figures 27 and 28) were in common use from earliest times.

Fishing was an important food producing industry, and over fifty different types of fish are mentioned in texts dating earlier than 2300 B.C.[84] After that date, however, the records are almost nonexistent,[85] indicating that the industry was no longer important, or perhaps merely

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[81] Kramer, op. cit., p. 104.

[82] Ibid.

[83] Ibid.

[84] Ibid., p. 110.

[85] Ibid.



Figure 27: A silver model of a boat with a high prow and stern.

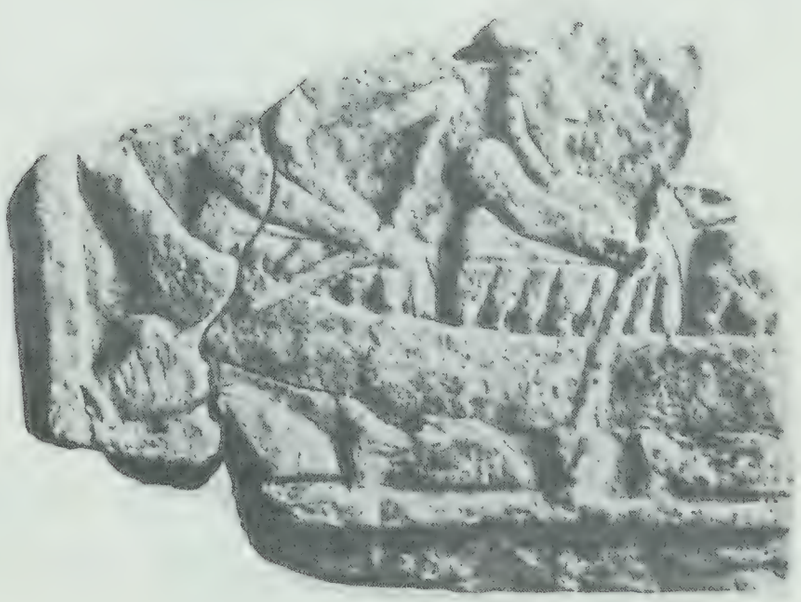


Figure 28: A fragment of a relief depicting two figures propelling a boat with paddles.

signifying a change in food preferences. Significantly, the fish, even in historic times throughout Mesopotamia, was considered sacred.[86]

The remains of fishing nets, complete with stone weights and wooden floats, have been unearthed,[87] and in a grave at Kish, bronze fish hooks were found but no harpoons were present, "a fact which is a little surprising considering the enormous size of the fish bones found everywhere."[88]

Both fishing and boating seem to have been vigorously and knowledgeably pursued, and once again one might assume the existence of a class of professionals depending for their livelihood on such activities.

Board Games

Among the treasures discovered by Woolley in the royal graves of Ur were four gaming boards which differed from each other only in the decoration of the cells. The boards are oblongs of 3 x 8 cells from which two cells have been omitted on each of the outer edges (Figure 29). They, therefore, contain twenty cells and have a drawer to hold the playing pieces. In one case a complete set of counters was found, in tact, in the drawer: seven black shell counters, all inlaid alike with five white dots, and seven white shell counters, this time inlaid with five black dots.[89]

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[86] Mumford, op. cit., p. 134.

[87] S. Lloyd. Mesopotamia, (London: Lovat Dickson, 1936), p. 110.

[88] Ibid., p. 121.

[89] L. Woolley. Ur Excavations: The Royal Cemeteries, Vol. II, (Oxford: University Press, 1934), pp. 274-9.

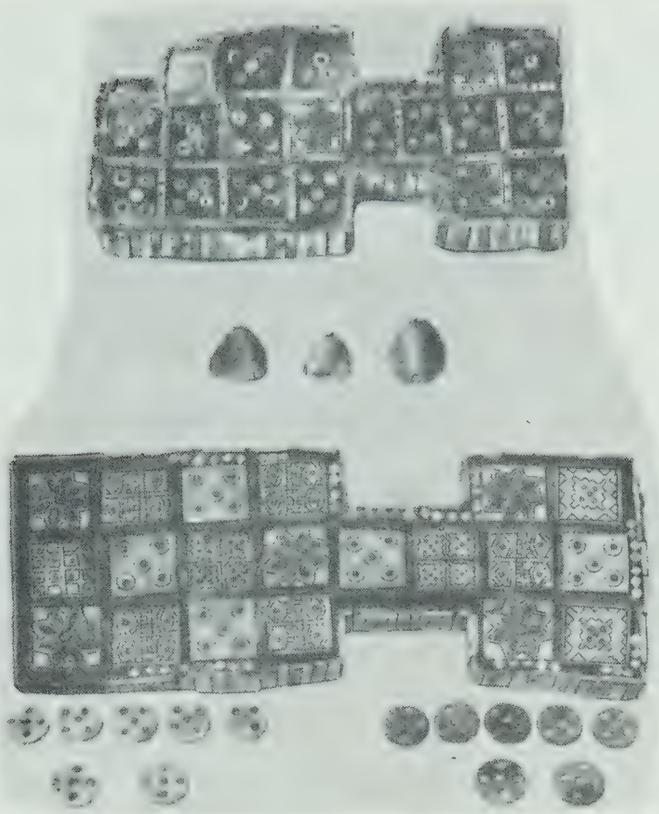


Figure 29: Inlaid gaming-boards with playing pieces from the graves of Ur.

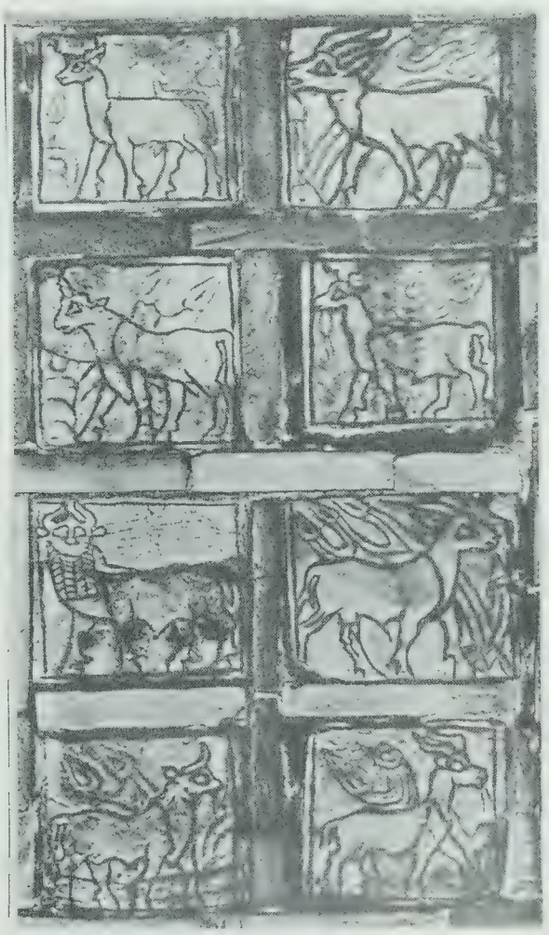


Figure 30: Elaborate chequer-board inlaid with animal scenes.

The upper surface of the board is covered with bitumen, in which little squares of shell are fixed to form the cells.[90] In the more elaborate boards the shell plaques are inlaid with lapis lazuli and red limestone and are divided by lapis lazuli strips.[91] In others the cells are engraved with animal scenes (Figure 30).

The only invariable element in the boards found at Ur is the rosette star.[92] It has been suggested by Van Buren that the rosette was a lucky sign, while the eyes decorating the sides of the board and some of the fields were believed to symbolize the 'Evil Eye' and were consequently unlucky.[93] The rosette is clearly evident on the middle row on one side of the bridge (where the cells are lacking in the outer rows) and on the two outer row cells on the other side of the bridge. The more elaborate board (Figure 29, lower) also has rosettes on the two outer edge cells of the 3 x 4 end. Woolley commented on this:

> From this lack of agreement one can only conclude that either the boards were intended for different games or if, as seems more likely, the game was the same, the three rosettes are the only things essential to the play, and the other designs are purely decorative.[94]

Murray has offered the following suggestion as to how the game was played:

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[90] H.J.R. Murray. Games in the Ancient World, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952), p. 20.

[91] L. Woolley. Ur: The First Phases, (London: Penguin Books Ltd., 1946), p. 35.

[92] Ibid.

[93] E.D. Van Buren. "A Gaming Board from Tall Halaf", Iraq, Vol. IV, Part I, (Spring 1937), p. 14.

[94] Woolley, Ur Excavations, p. 278.

> Both games are arranged for the use of a number of lots which give four different throws. In the more elaborate boards, the marked cells are the fourth, eighth, twelfth etc., starting from the inner end of the group of four cells on the outer rows and passing down the middle row, and this indicates the direction of the earlier moves. It is suggested that the track in the Ur board consisted of twenty-seven points, but the turn was taken directly and the men were borne from different cells. The men on reaching the penultimate cell of the middle row pass to a rosetted cell on the outer row, pass around the outside of the 3 x 2 rectangle and enter the middle row and finally to the outer row of the 3 x 4 rectangle from which they are borne by appropriate throws of the lots. It will be seen that by playing in this way every fourth cell is marked with a rosette.[95]

Some interesting discoveries concerning the origin of modern chess have been uncovered by Gadd.[96] He does not attribute the development of the game to the Sumerians as he based his theories on the emergence of divination as a military science, which he dated to the late (post-Hammurabi) Old Babylonian period. However, King has confirmed that divination was practised by the Sumerians,[97] and perhaps the development of the game can be traced back to them.

It was believed that the gods sent warnings to their worshippers relative to the fate that lay in store for them. One form of this were the signs left when oil was poured upon water, and a second was related to the patterns formed by the entrails of a sacrificial victim. Certain

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[95] Murray, op. cit., pp. 20-21.

[96] J.C. Gadd. "Babylonian Chess", Iraq, Vol. VIII, (1946), p. 66.

[97] King, op. cit., p. 183.

configurations of the liver and other viscera were regarded as favourable omens, others as unfavourable.[98] Thus a king, before engaging in a military campaign, would consult a priest concerning the chances of success. The sacrifice would be made, and after examing the entrails, the priest would suggest the most advantageous time for the king to proceed.

Gadd, in developing his argument for the origin of an early form of chess, attempts to relate divination and warfare to an ancient board game embodying many features of actual warfare and bearing a close resemblance to modern chess. He refers to a Babylonian text in which an omen appears, derived from the entrails of a sacrificed victim.[99] In it appear the words "took his appointed time" or "his opportunity", and bearing in mind the method used in playing a modern board game they are suggestive of a "move" or "turn" in such a game. Also in the same text the liver, or "guts", are described as being "like a net".[100] Further, the word "Suskallu", an Akkadian adaptation of the Sumerian "Sus-gal", appears and has been translated as meaning "the great overwhelmer."[101] What is meant by it is shown in Figure 31, another fragment of the Stele of the Vultures, where a god has caught, in a wide meshed net or cage, the warriors of an opposing army who can be seen struggling and writhing

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[98] Gadd, op. cit., p. 70.

[99] Ibid.

[100] Ibid.

[101] Ibid.



Figure 31: A fragment from the "Stele of the Vultures" depicting enemy warriors held captive in a net.



Figure 32: Ivory rook from the twelfth century A.D.

within it. On the relief, the cords of this meshed object are symmetrically arranged, but its rounded corners at the top indicate that the object should be taken for a net. Its rigid appearance may be partly due, once again, to the Sumerians' imperfect knowledge of perspective characteristics.

From a simple observation, the net could suggest the squares of a chess board on which the "game" of war was played, and in many respects actual war was itself looked upon as a game as its seasonal nature would tend to indicate. Warfare at this time in history exhibited certain temporal aspects which modern warfare does not have. It was governed by the seasons, and was postponed during the inclement part of the year.

Further, the fact must not be overlooked that the Sumerians did develop a game on a board which had a simple form of a rectangle, with slight variations, subdivided by lines at right angles, such as is employed by all chess-like games everywhere.

In turning now to the "pieces" or "men" used in playing the game, certain important implications are to be found confirming further the earlier argument for the Sumerian chariot being a two-wheeled vehicle even from its inception. Murray, in his research on the early forms of the rook, discovered a feature peculiar to many of the earlier examples, namely that the top edge had a cleft in the middle and curved upwards and outwards on each side.[102] An example is to be seen in Figure 32 depicting an ivory chesspiece -- a rook -- which he dates to

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[102] H.J.R. Murray. A History of Chess, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962), pp. 705, 767.

the twelfth century A.D. The resemblance of the top of this object to the chariot front seen in the detailed illustration taken from the "Standard" of Ur (Figure 33) is too close to be denied. Describing a scene upon the Stele of the Vultures (Figure 1) Contenau wrote:

> The patesi (local ruler) is in a chariot. One can still see the walls of the car and its apron. This apron, when you see it from the front, looks like a tall board with a cleft in the middle to allow the passage of the reins clearly visible on the bas-reliefs. This arrangement is attested by the small votive chariots in terra cotta [Figure 34]. They always have, relative to the sides of the car, this tall shape which acts as a protective device; the cleft for the reins is always there too.[103]

Gadd mentions a medieval ivory rook now in the Musée Cluny showing two thin, parallel ridges falling transversely over the cleft at the top, and suggests that these may have represented the reins.[104] Secondly, it is well known that the double curve on the top of the rook later developed into one or even two towers which caused the piece to change into the castle, now its prevailing name.[105]

Taking into account the high front of the Sumerian chariot, its similarity with the shape of the early rook, and the fact that the Persian word "rukh" originally meant "chariot",[106] it would seem that this Sumerian vehicle may have lent its shape and function to a war-like board game.

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[103] Gadd, loc. cit.

[104] Ibid., p. 71.

[105] Ibid.

[106] Murray, op. cit., p. 160.

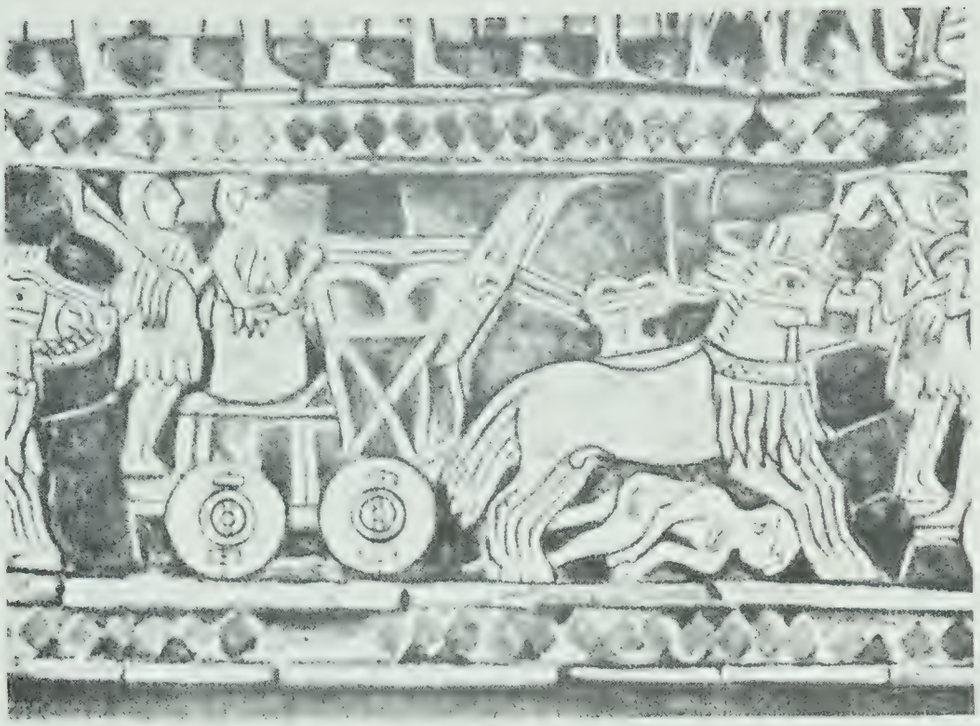


Figure 33: Detail of a war chariot from the "Standard of Ur". The similarity between the high front panel and the twelfth century ivory rook is clearly evident.



Figure 34: Terra-cotta model of a two-wheeled Sumerian chariot.

All the examples of Sumerian chariots depicted here are dated earlier than 2000 B.C. and, as will be seen in the discussion of Hittite chariotry, the form of this vehicle in western Asia had altered completely by about 1500 B.C. However, all the medieval chessmen such as the one illustrated (Figure 32) are later than 1000 A.D., which would suggest that not only the pattern of the Sumerian chariot-front, but the ideas which motivated its shape, were preserved in an almost incredibly distant imitation.[107]

It is difficult to resist linking this "chariot" piece to the real Sumerian counterpart which, it seems, gave to the former its shape and name. In drawing the pieces of the puzzle together Gadd wrote:

> The 'net' in the omen is a Sumerian word (Susgal) and is best illustrated by one of the celebrated monuments of Sumerian art; the officer at the head of his company bears a Sumerian name (Satam); the chariot which seems to be perpetuated in the medieval Rooks is a Sumerian chariot. Everything, in fact, points consistently to the early Dynastic age in Babylonia as the possible origin of a board game using squares, employing named and different pieces which included a 'company' of 'men at arms' under some 'officer', and also 'chariots'. Such a game must necessarily be a war-game remembering of course that liver-divination throughout antiquity was essentially a branch of military science.[108]

However, one must not overlook the fact that divination as a military science is now known to have existed in Sumer, and it is possible that the development of a simple form of this game could be traced back to the Sumerians. The 'net' on the Stele of the Vultures would certainly

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[107] Gadd, loc. cit.

[108] Ibid.

indicate this. Whatever the outcome of further investigation into this problem, several other important inferences can be made. First, the tall clefted panel was almost certainly located at the front of the car, and not at the side as those on the "Standard" of Ur would indicate. Secondly, the wheel shown under this panel should perhaps be located on the other side of the car. If correct, the earliest Sumerian chariots were, in fact, two-wheeled and the method of pivoting a car on a single axle had occurred to them.

The gaming board from Tell Halaf (Figure 35) provides an interesting comparison and has, again, important implications for the arguments put forward. This gaming board is of white marble. One half is almost square in shape, the other half is a narrower prolongation with a rounded end. As the square end is hollow, a similarity with the gaming boards at Ur becomes immediately evident. All boards had a drawer inserted into one end to hold the playing pieces.

The back and sides of the Tell Halaf board are smoothed and on them designs are scratched (Figure 36). On one side the shoulders and head of a bull can be made out; on the other, a stag. On the upper part of the back surface are two men in a light, two-wheeled chariot. It seems to be a hunting scene. The appearance of a chariot with two spoked wheels on a gaming board of a period contemporary with the Sumerian period not only supports the theory for the Sumerian two-wheeled chariot, but also confirms Oppenheim's argument for the two types of wheel developing together. It would seem that the construction of the spoked variety required the less stunted flora found in the vicinity of Tell

Figure 35:



Figures 35 and 36: The gaming-board from Tell-Halaf.



FIG. 1. The Gaming-board from Tall Halaf

Figure 36:

Halaf, a site near the far northern reaches of the Sumerian Empire.

On the front face are to be seen twenty sunken rectangles, a further similarity with those gaming boards unearthed at Ur, which led Van Buren to the conclusion that this object was, in fact, a gaming board and not, as has been suggested, an incense burner or a handle to a ceremonial fan.[109]

The great interest of the Tell Halaf board is that it forms a link between the richly variegated boards from Ur, and the Assyrian examples made of stone.[110] However, the true affinity of this board is with the examples from the Royal Cemetery at Ur. The number of fields is the same although they are rectangular rather than square; they also must have been filled with incrustation in various colours to differentiate the value of the moves, and playing pieces like those found at Ur must have been employed.

In connection with the game of "chess" previously described, the Tell Halaf board should be compared with the sculpture in the round (Figure 37), a stele of victory depicting a net containing prisoners of war, and similar to the net carried by the god on the Stele of the Vultures (Figure 31). The similarity between the Tell Halaf board and the stele of victory cannot be denied. The latter, too, has twenty fields and if merely coincidence, the similarity of the shape of these two artifacts alone is striking. It is indeed tempting to view the Tell Halaf board as being a highly schematized version of the stele of

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[109] Van Buren, loc. cit.

[110] Ibid.



Figure 37: A victory stele depicting a net containing enemy warriors. Note the similarity between this monument and the gaming-board from Tell-Halaf.

victory. The depth of the fields of the board in question is puzzling, but if one views this object as a net, one might also assume that the deep fields were meant to indicate that it was to be thought of as three dimensional. It is possible that the filling of coloured incrustation mentioned by Van Buren may have depicted the heads of enemy captives held within. Perhaps later they developed into the rosette design so prevalent on the boards from Ur.

If these theories are correct, they provide a further link between Sumerian divination as a military science, the net, and finally the Sumerian chariot, with the board game incorporating many of the principles of warfare. As warfare was an integral part of life it is in no way surprising that the Sumerians developed numerous activities related to it. As kingship played such an important part in the actual event, one can imagine the king amusing himself by sitting down to a game of "chariots and infantry", an ancient variety of modern chess.

There has been no evidence to suggest that such board games were restricted for use by royalty and the nobility. All the boards found at Ur were particularly elaborate and all were found in the graves. They must have been used by the king during his life on earth and were obviously considered important enough to him to be included in the list of grave goods for use in the world beyond. This is not to say, however, that the people of the lower classes did not amuse themselves with such games. Their gaming boards may not have been as elaborate, but certainly it was within the ability of most Sumerians to construct a crude clay board with the necessary counters. Those boards which have

survived certainly attest to the leisured existence enjoyed by these people, at least between war campaigns.

Summary

It was with startling vitality and appealing directness that the art of the Sumerian civilization revealed the intensity with which these people lived out their various roles in society. Certainly it all happened 5000 years ago, but one cannot deny that the land between the rivers witnessed the origin of more than one significant feature of present day civilization.

The Sumerians were remarkable, not only for their material progress and technological resourcefulness, but also for their ideas. Settling amongst numerous war-like tribes, they quickly turned their intellect towards developing the skills of warfare. The celebrated "Standard" of Ur, with its triple frieze of little shell figures, is valuable not only for its decorative qualities but, like Eannatum's "Stele of the Vultures" from Lagash and the later stele of Naramsin, it is an invaluable document from which to judge the military equipment and methods of the Sumerians.

Most writers attribute the development of the four-wheeled war-chariot to the Sumerians, but in view of the evidence it would seem that perhaps this vehicle was two-wheeled from the beginning and, if not as light and manoeuvrable as later war chariots, then certainly more manoeuvrable than first thought.

The domestication of the horse or onager by the Sumerians showed

initiative in itself, but to develop a team capable of pulling a war chariot into battle was, perhaps, an even greater achievement. With this innovation, together with the highly coordinated phalanx, a certain amount of expansion and conquest must have taken place under the earliest dynasties, and ultimately sufficient wealth was derived from these war ventures to secure a leisurely life, making possible the gradual perfection of the arts and crafts.

Their development was most notable in the banquet and festival scenes, and considerable ingenuity was noted in the range and structure of the various musical instruments. It would seem that music, both instrumental and vocal, played a large role in Sumerian life, and that some of the musicians were important figures in the temples and court. Poetry and song flourished, most of the works being hymns to the gods and kings for use in the temple and palace,[111] but there is every reason to believe that music, song and dance were a major source of entertainment in the home and market place.[112]

Boxing and various forms of wrestling, too, helped satisfy the thirst of the upper classes for entertainment. Their existence is evidence of the vitality and initiative of the people, who seemed to have developed these arts beyond those needed on the battle-field. One can detect a degree of refinement and can assume their great popularity in view of the fact that statuettes of the exponents of these sports were used as decoration in temples and even private homes.

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[111] Kramer, op. cit., p. 100.

[112] Ibid.

If further evidence is unearthed relating to the emergence of "chess", and the game itself is proved to have stemmed from the Sumerians, and not from the Babylonians who may merely have used the Sumerian chariot for the design of their rook, one could consider the game to be a unique contribution to the culture of modern man. How often, when this universal game is played, does one stop to consider that it may have had its origins on the battle-fields between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers nearly 5000 years ago.

Further evidence of the leisured existence led by the nobility is to be seen in Lloyd's description of one of the better houses unearthed during excavations:

> The outer compartment of the bedroom gave some indication of how this lady spent her leisure hours. In the corners were little piles of mussle and other varieties of shell, while the floor was littered with tiny triangular and diamond shaped snippets of mother-of-pearl cut from their nacre lining. There were also thin sheets of dried bitumen upon which they were to be arranged as an inlay pattern and here and there a discarded fragment of the finished work. The blade of a fine bronze knife was perhaps the tool with which the inlay was cut. One is led to infer that this particular craft was considered a genteel occupation for a young lady, like needle work in the last century.[113]

Such is the type of evidence which must be used to determine the recreational pursuits of the Sumerian people. Any attempt to reconstruct the obscure and elusive data must necessarily be incomplete at this stage in the excavations of the Sumerian mounds, and under these circumstances there were bound to be considerable differences in views, even among

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[113] Lloyd, op. cit., p. 110.

seasoned Sumerologists.

From the evidence presented, however, one cannot deny Kramer's view:

> Be he philosopher or teacher, historian or poet, lawyer or reformer, statesman or politician, architect or sculptor, it is likely that modern man will find his prototype and counterpart in ancient Sumer.[114]

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[114] Kramer, op. cit., p. 5.

CHAPTER IV

HITTITE INSTITUTIONS

Origin

Although efforts to identify the Hittite race have failed, there is some general indication of the direction from whence they came. There are several schools of thought: in the main that they were part of a great migration from the east; that they were Semitic; or that they passed from Europe into Asia, absorbing and adopting Eastern thought and habits.[1]

On arriving in Anatolia they settled and imposed their culture on the native population which itself had already reached a high level of civilization, no doubt higher than that of the intruders.[2] The two races fused and the resulting "Hittite" civilization came to dominate the area.

The name "Hittite" is commonly employed in three senses which must be distinguished: it may be used in reference to the whole confederacy of peoples as depicted on the Egyptian monuments, or to the smaller and more homogeneous band of Hittite tribes, or to the dominant tribe of Hatti.[3] The Egyptian artists indeed recognised the mixed character of the confederates in their day and noted some of their peculiarities on their monuments. They do not, however, throw any light upon the question

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[1] A. Goetze. "State and Society of the Hittites", Historia, (1964), p. 23.

[2] Ibid.

[3] J. Garstang. The Land of the Hittites, (London: Constable and Company, Ltd., 1910), p. 318.

of the original race of the Hittite tribes.[4]

The appearance of the pigtail in many sculptures would seem to indicate relationships with the east.[5] Yet another link is the early employment by the Hittites of the horse, dating from at least the beginning of the second millenium B.C., and the antiquity of the remains of horses found in the mounds of Turkestan.[6] Further evidence relating to their eastward origin may be found in the footwear of the Hittites, which is usually represented as a shoe, or boot, with an upturned toe. Garstang's theory is that it was a natural form of snowshoe for highland regions and had been especially adapted for walking upon broken and stoney ground.[7] This reasoning supports the theory of a mountain origin of its Hittite wearers. The Caucasus and Taurus ranges lie to the east and could, conceivably, have been the birth place of the numerous mountain cults that populate the Hittite pantheon.[8]

When they entered Anatolia the Hittites were barbarians.[9] In times past, Babylonian caravans had traded in Asia Minor, and later, merchants from Assyria had settled there.[10] These business communities made the

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[4] Ibid.

[5] A.H. Sayce. The Hittites. The Story of a Forgotten Empire, (London: The Religious Tract Society, 1910), p. 102.

[6] Garstang, op. cit., p. 320.

[7] Ibid., p. 321.

[8] Sayce, op. cit., pp. 105-121.

[9] Breasted, op. cit., p. 207.

[10] Ibid.

Hittites acquainted with commercial transactions, and in copying their business ventures, the Hittites themselves gradually learned to read the clay-tablet invoices written in cuneiform which the Assyrian merchants brought with them.[11] By 2000 B.C. they were a highly civilized people fully able to compete with the greatest nations of the ancient Near East, rising twice to rival Egypt and Assyria. Ceram wrote of them:

> Seventy years ago the Hittites and their Empire were unknown. Our schools still teach that the Mesopotamian and Egyptian kingdoms alone shaped the political and military history of the second millennium B.C. in Asia Minor and the Near East. But for a while the Hittite Empire was their equal, and the Hittite capital of Hattusas matched Babylon and Thebes - not in culture, but in armed might and political importance.[12]

Religion

The main sources -- thousands of religious texts contained in the royal archives of the Hittite capital -- are a vivid manifestation of the religious character of Hittite society, and particularly of the Hittite kingship.

Tablets have been found at Boghazkoy, mainly in one of the temples and on the citadel. But this does not mean that religious texts were kept in the "Temple Library" or political documents in the "Palace Archives"; on the contrary, at both places there were found all kinds of texts which showed that there was no distinction between what could

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[11] Ceram, op. cit., p. 87.

[12] Ibid., p. 254.

be called the religious and political functions of the king and his court.[13]

In spite of the overwhelming number of texts, our sources are limited in time as well as with regard to their contents.[14] They all belong to the two centuries of the Hittite Empire and with few exceptions cannot be ascribed to a more exact date within this period.[15] No development or history of Hittite religion can, therefore, be written.

Many tablets dealt with the religious performances and duties of the king, but there was no direct evidence of the piety of the ordinary man. It appears that the Hittites took over many cultural elements from the earlier populations of Anatolia, which perhaps justifies tracing back some of their religious conceptions through earlier periods.

The Hittites had a highly developed polytheistic system, the result of long development. Many of the gods belonged to certain towns and the existence of local deities in the early stages may be assumed.[16]

Many of the gods and goddesses connected with certain places bore the same name for example, the Weather-god of the cities of Nerik and Samuha.[17] The question arises whether these were originally local gods or whether there was a conception of one Weather-god worshipped at

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[13] H.G. Guterbock. "Hittite Religion", Forgotten Religions, ed. Vergilius Ferm, New York, (1949), Philosophical Library, p. 83.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Gurney, op. cit., p. 134.

[17] Guterbock, op. cit., p. 85.

different places. The most likely answer is that all Weather-gods were, in fact, primarily local deities who showed the common characteristic of bestowing fertility through rain and whose names, therefore, were written with the Mesopotamian ideogram for Weather-god when the Hittite priests learned to write cuneiform.[18]

In this highly developed system of gods there can be found traces of previous stages such as the worship of mountains, rivers, animals and fetishes.[19] In the Hittite texts divine mountains, which were considered either as independent gods or as satellites of the Weather-god, were mentioned and both types were also represented in art. Many personal names (Arnuwandas, Tudhaliyas and Ammuna) were originally names of mountains and point to the holiness of these peaks.[20]

Zoomorphic representation was restricted to the Weather-god, who often appeared as a bull.[21] Anthropomorphic representation of gods was known in Anatolia from the beginning of the second millennium, and on a higher level of development the bull became the holy animal of the god.[22] Two bulls might be attached to the god's chariot, and in the late Hittite period the god was depicted as standing on the bull.[23]

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[18] Ibid.

[19] G.G. Furlani. "The Basic Aspect of Hittite Religion", Harvard Theological Review, XXXI, (1938), p. 236.

[20] Guterbock, op. cit., p. 87.

[21] Ibid.

[22] Ibid.

[23] R.T. O'Callaghan. "An Approach to Some Religious Problems of Karatepe", Archiv Orientalni, (1950), p. 361.

The role of the Weather-god is difficult to understand. The conception of a supreme god who ruled over rain and thunderstorm was, of course, very appropriate for a country like Anatolia, northern Syria and northern Mesopotamia, where all life depended on the rains. There were, however, many special forms of the Weather-god which have been grouped under two main aspects: one connected with nature, like the Weather-god of thunder and lightning, and the other with political functions, like the Weather-god of the palace and army. The connection of a god of thunderstorm and rain with an animal characterized through its force, loud bellow and virility is easily understood.

Worship of the Mother-goddess -- the main goddess -- seems to have been paramount throughout the Hittite lands.[24] Originally a nature cult connected with the productivity of the earth, she was now viewed as a universal mother. She often preceded her husband, the Weather-god, in the ceremonial order of gods. Whether this reflected an older system of matriarchal character with a goddess as the highest deity or not cannot be decided as yet.[25]

On the fertile plains of Babylonia the seasonal productivity of nature was quite conspicuous. Man was, in earlier times, able to give up his wandering life and settle, the regularity of the seasons providing him with the means of living. Under such circumstances, worship of a goddess was readily acceptable to a peasant people. From the sculptures

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[24] Garstang, op. cit., p. 354.

[25] Guterbock, op. cit., p. 90.

of Boghazkoy it seems that the goddess was associated with a youth whose male powers were necessary to complete her own.[26] With her, there also appeared a lioness or panther, whose force and character seemed to be symbolic of hers. Also associated with the Mother-goddess were a number of divine attendants and priestesses. The cult at this age was at its height of simplicity; in some cases the goddess worshipped alone, in others she was accompanied by the son-consort, whose position in legend at Boghazkoy was secondary to her own.

In yet another phase, the male god predominated. The new divinity was a god with lightning in his hand. Well known in Western Asia,[27] he came into Asia Minor as guardian deity of the conquering Hatti, clad like their warriors and worshipped as a god of war.[28] In him, the embodiment of manly strength, the nature worshippers saw the sun ruling the skies, a fitting husband for their Mother-goddess.

As might be expected, some of the systematization of the Hittite pantheon was achieved by forming divine families.[29] In addition to the Weather-god and Mother-goddess, other divine beings included the Sun-gods and goddesses, and the Moon-god, whose sacred animal was the lion.

It was not hard to reconcile the cults. Just as the sun's return in spring-time was necessary to revive the dormant earth, so was the

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[26] W.M. Calder. "Notes on Anatolian Religion", Journal of Manchester Egyptian and Oriental Society, XI, (1924), p. 21.

[27] Garstang, op. cit., p. 355.

[28] Gurney, op. cit., p. 140.

[29] Guterbock, op. cit., p. 91.

periodic union of the god with the goddess natural and appropriate in order to bring forth the fruits of the earth. The association of the Father-god with the Son-god in the cult of the Mother-goddess, nature's divine triad seems to have been an essential feature of the religion of these times.[30]

The sources deal only with the official cult; nothing is known of how the ordinary man approached his gods.[31] In the state, the worship of the gods was of the highest importance. The historical texts mention more than once the kings having to delay a campaign in order to perform religious duties. Ritual feasts covered several days, and sometimes included travels all around the shrines of the country; the special prescriptions which aimed at keeping the king from contagion with anything ritually unclean, and consultation with various oracles, were also time-consuming, and one can hardly imagine how the Hittite kings found time to do anything else.

Omina and Oracles

The omen literature of the Hittites is borrowed from Babylonia and many kinds of omina, such as astrological or birth omina, are represented.[32] The Hittites, like other ancient peoples, always consulted omens before a military campaign or other important enterprise,[33] and as a whole their

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[30] Ibid., p. 94.

[31] Ibid.

[32] Ibid., p. 95.

[33] Gurney, op. cit., p. 158.

omen literature shows no original features. Augury appears to have been an acquired art, as models of the liver, which were used for the training of the haruspices, were found at Boghazkoy. They bore for that purpose, inscriptions stating the meaning of the various shapes of different parts of the liver.[34]

To a member of this ancient society, it would seem that all phenomena in Nature, and indeed all great matters that seemed beyond human control, were governed by mighty but man-like forces.[35] Every city had its temple where the invisible and immortal gods resided. They were imagined as absolutely human and had to be fed, washed, clothed and entertained with dancing and music.[36] The god was to his worshippers exactly what a master was to his slaves.[37] The Hittites primary attitude towards their innumerable national and local cults was one of tolerance, and although wise from a political point of view, it was unwise from the cultural aspect and would certainly have prevented the creation of a homogeneous spiritual substructure.

Hittite State and Society

Kingship

Hittite political power was the creation of a conquering

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[34] Guterbock, loc. cit.

[35] Gurney, op. cit., p. 156.

[36] A. Goetze. "The Hittite Ritual of Tunnawi", American Oriental Series, Vol. 14, (1938), p. 23.

[37] Gurney, loc. cit.

Indo-European élite transplanted within the confines of the near eastern cultural sphere and imposing its own culture on the native population.[38] The development of kingship reveals a foreign element gradually adapting itself to its new habitat.[39] The early concept of kingship and state, as revealed by contemporary sources, gives the impression of primitivity; they rested on what may be called an archaic patriarchal order in which the king seems to have been the head of a dominant clan and the elective chieftain of the nobility as a whole.[40] Clans played a decisive part and first among them was the "great clan" from which the king himself stemmed. The political power and the economic prosperity which the period enjoyed are generally attributed to the fact that the "great clan" was sufficiently close-knit to hold the country under firm control.[41] Members of the royal family administered outlying districts of the country for the king. On the other hand the king, like the father of a big family or head of a large household, was asked to care for the welfare of his subjects.

Succession within the same family tended to become an early practice, leading eventually to hereditary succession by the chosen off-spring,

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[38] There are several schools of thought on the origin of the Hittites, in the main that they were part of a great migration from the East, that they were Semitic, or that they passed like the Phrygian conquerors from Europe into Asia, absorbing and adopting Eastern thoughts and habits.

[39] A. Goetze. "State and Society of the Hittites", p. 25.

[40] Ibid.

[41] Ibid.

though this was still subject to the endorsement of the ruling classes.[42] The codification of the hereditary monarchy in the edict of Telepinus was of lasting benefit to the ruling family;[43] yet at the same time not only did it sanction the nobility's previously attested immunity from royal jurisdiction,[44] it also granted them judiciary powers over the dynasty, establishing them as a tribunal in cases of constitutional crimes.[45]

Of particular importance for an understanding of early Hittite kingship is the institution called Pankus, which played a significant role in the Testament of King Hattusilis.[46] The Pankus and dignitaries represented that part of the Hittite "nation" which by blood or position had a vote in the affairs of the state.[47] In the edict of Telepinus it was stated that the Pankus had the power to try individuals of its own class and even the king himself was responsible to it for crimes of blood and could actually be put to death. This was unique in the ancient near east.[48]

Yet another document bearing on the Pankus was a list of social

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[42] Gurney, op. cit., p. 63.

[43] Ceram, op. cit., p. 124.

[44] Gurney, op. cit., p. 64.

[45] Ibid., p. 65.

[46] Goetze, op. cit., p. 28.

[47] Gurney, op. cit., p. 68.

[48] Ceram, op. cit., p. 128.

groups drawn up for magic purposes.[49] In it the Pankus occupied the primary place and was followed in order by high court officials, then by priests, by the military, the judiciary and by the 'kin of the Pankus'.[50] Thus it enumerated the upper strata of society before dealing with the lower classes - the mercenaries, retainers, slaves and plebs. The way in which this was done suggests that the upper stratum was, in fact, considered as royalty. As the edict of Telepinus stated, the welfare of the old state depended on their loyalty to the dynasty.

During the obscure interval between the Old and New Kingdoms, the increasing seepage of pronouncedly oriental influences into the Hittite lands effected a thorough and striking change in the kingship concept. Nothing more was heard of the Pankus,[51] and aristocratic government was replaced by traditional near eastern despotism. Also prevalent were notions of super-human qualities infused by divinity,[52] as well as the sanctity of the royal person, which had to be protected against defilement by a body-guard and an elaborate court ceremonial.[53] The king was now conceived as the earthly deputy of the storm god, whereas previously this had not been the case.[54] Upon his death "he [became] a god"[55]

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[49] Goetze, loc. cit.

[50] Ibid.

[51] Gurney, op. cit., p. 69.

[52] Ibid., p. 65.

[53] Ibid.

[54] Goetze, op. cit., p. 26.

[55] Gurney, op. cit., p. 65.

rather than merely dying, and was thereafter worshipped in rituals. He was not, however, deified in his own lifetime.[56]

The religious duties of the king assumed increased significance. He was the indispensable high priest, and his personal attendance to a multitude of cult functions was essential to the spiritual well-being of the realm, because neglect was sure to provoke divine anger.[57] Sometimes important military enterprises had to be suspended or delegated in order to take care of pressing religious matters.[58]

The more worldly duties of the king included supreme command of the military with annual summer campaigns,[59] and occasional extended periods away from the seat of power. With increased international sophistication, his diplomatic tasks assumed added significance. The king was not only law-giver, but also chief judge, especially in cases involving high treason and capital offenses in general.[60]

Queenship

It is another example of the mixed origin of the Hittite civilization that the patriarchal elements characteristic of the Hittite idea of

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[56] Ibid.

[57] Furlani, op. cit., p. 240.

[58] Gurney, loc. cit.

[59] J. Garstang. The Hittite Empire, (London: Constable, 1929), p. 7.

[60] Ibid.

kingship were coupled with matriarchal elements governing the idea of queenship.[61] Among the Hittites, queenship was inherited independently from kingship.[62] It was not necessary that a queen should be the king's wife; a queen surviving her husband would remain queen, and only after her death would she be replaced by a new queen, who may have been her daughter-in-law.[63]

The position of the queen was not merely ceremonial, but also had a bearing on politics.[64] She appeared to have made full use of her constitutional prerogatives of independent action and initiative and there is evidence that she conducted her own negotiations with foreign powers. In negotiations between the Hittites and the Egyptians, the step taken by the king in communications to Ramses II was usually parallelled by one of the queen in a communication to the Pharoah's wife.[65] This remarkable feminine prominence in the midst of a predominantly patriarchal society can be attributed to the vestiges of the pre-Indo-European matriarchal culture.[66]

Political and Social Structure

With the expansion of Hittite power beyond the Cappadocian Plateau

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[61] J. Garstang. The Land of the Hittites, p. 353.

[62] Ibid.

[63] Goetze, op. cit., p. 27.

[64] J. Garstang. The Hittite Empire, p. 7.

[65] Gurney, op. cit., p. 67.

[66] Goetze, op. cit., p. 28.

and its increasing international stature, there evolved certain patterns of imperial government and diplomacy.

The spirit of the New Kingdom (1400 - 1200 B.C.) was markedly different from that of the Old Kingdom, magnified perhaps by the lack of knowledge of the Middle Kingdom, which was the interim period. The Empire was no longer limited to Anatolia and the Hittites began to take part in "world politics", dictating policies to a large degree.[67]

Great changes took place around the middle of the second millennium, in the span between the Old and New Kingdoms, and can be attributed, in part, to the introduction of the horse and light chariot and its revolutionary effect on warfare.[68]

It was not by chance that the Hittite king now called himself "my Sun".[69] The title put him in a relationship to the gods, a phenomenon which was uncommon in the Old Kingdom, and reflected Mesopotamian influence.[70] This innovation found vivid expression in the prayer which a priest, "the anointed", pronounced when the king paid homage to the gods.

> Let the Tabarnas, the king be agreeable to the gods!
> The land belongs to the Storm God;
> Heaven and earth and (its) people belong to the Storm God
> He made the Labarnas, the king (his) governor and gave him
> the whole Hittite land

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[67] Ibid., p. 29.

[68] S. Yievia. "Canaanite and Hittite Strategy in the Second Half of the Second Millennium B.C.", Journal of Near Eastern Studies, IX, Chicago, (1950), p. 101.

[69] Goetze, loc. cit.

[70] Cottrell, op. cit., p. 163.

> Let the Labarnas govern the whole land with (his) hand
> He who comes too close to the person and domain(?) of the Labarnas, the king -
> Let the Storm God destroy him![71]

So the king was considered the god's deputy, and when he died he "becomes god".

The structure of the Hittite state is clarified by the numerous treaties. As soon as the relationship with foreign states had become more than an episode, as soon as it was accepted as part of world order - perhaps one ordained by the gods - it had to be expressed in forms sanctioned by law, i.e., international law.[72]

For "co-existence" a treaty of "brotherhood" and of "peace" was deemed necessary; its main substance was the acknowledgement of either partner that the other was his equal.[73] A policy of strict reciprocity was adhered to; one granted the partner exactly that which was granted to oneself. The only surviving example is the treaty between Hattusilis III and Ramses II c.a. 1284.[74] The sections deal with military assistance, and guarantees that the respective rules of succession would be recognised.[75] Either explicitly or implicitly, the territorial claims of the two partners - the most common source of conflict - were settled. Theoretically the treaties were concluded for eternity; in practice this

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[71] Goetze, op. cit., p. 29.

[72] Gurney, op. cit., p. 113.

[73] Goetze, op. cit., p. 30.

[74] Ibid.

[75] Ibid.

meant, of course, that they remained valid until broken whenever it seemed convenient to either of the partners. The king could later repent it and confess his sin to the gods by whom he had sworn solemn oaths.[76]

The Hittites, when dealing with foreign rulers, sometimes spoke of a "kuirwanas". It seemed that this was the name given to a king over whom the Hittite king exercised a protectorate. The larger countries around the periphery of the Hittite land belonged to this group: Kizzuwatna, the Mitanni land remaining after Suppiluliumas' conquests, and the Arzawa countries before Mursilis. These countries may have enjoyed privileges with respect to the payment of tribute. Negotiations with foreign states were prohibited to any Kuirwanas; it was essential that, under the treaty, they renounced the right to an independent foreign policy. This had to be channelled through the "Great King" in Hattusa.[77]

There was a tendency to limit such special privileges, to create a system of plain vassal states[78] and to integrate them more firmly into the empire. The treaties for vassal states required the regular payment of homage to the overlord, participation in his wars and payment of an annual tribute. In return, the overlord protected the vassal state against aggression. The treaty had to be renewed regularly and certainly

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[76] Ceram, op. cit., p. 126.

[77] Goetze, op. cit., p. 32.

[78] Gurney, op. cit., p. 74.

expired with the death of the king of the vassal state.[79]

Only in the centre of the Hittite territory were found royal governors who administered certain provinces for the king. They were appointed by the king and were responsible to him. This comparatively loose structure, that resembled, in many respects, a federation of more or less independent territories, was increasingly replaced by a more rigid organization. In particular, the Empire at its height saw to it that in conquered Syria, the decisive positions in Halba and in Carchemish remained in the hands of blood relatives who acted on the Great King's behalf when conflicts arose among Syrian vassals.[80] Dynastic marriages also aimed at creating closer relations between the Great King and his vassals.

In the essentially feudal Hittite society the nobles who filled the ranks of court and administrative positions possessed large fiefs as liegemen of the king.[81] At the same time this landed gentry constituted a higher warrior caste, and probably provided the armed chariotry which formed the backbone of the offensive military might.[82]

The bulk of the common people lived in villages and leased their land either directly from the crown, or from a temple, paying ground rent.[83]

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[79] J. Garstang. The Land of the Hittites, p. 358.

[80] Ceram, op. cit., p. 187.

[81] Gurney, op. cit., p. 70.

[82] Ibid.

[83] Sayce, op. cit., p. 70.

Holdings could, in principle, change hands only through inheritance, which led to widespread fictitious legal adoption practices designed to undercut the law. There were also records of communal land worked by "men of the tool",[84] or "artisans". The lease of this land could be acquired or disposed of through purchase or sale, or reverted to the village when the lease lapsed, whereas the crown land was re-possessed by the palace.[85] In practice the two types seem to have ultimately become holdings open to any person willing and able to assume the duties involved.

In the laws, two social classes were recognizable -- freemen and slaves -- and the borderline between them seemed to have been fluid. The "artisans" like most of the populace, were subject to the corvée[86] and occupied a position half-way between freemen and slaves, like the deportees from conquered lands who were bound to their assigned places of residence.

Concerning the status of slaves, the sources are strangely contradictory.[87] Basically, slaves were chattels to be disposed of as the owner pleased; yet they could own property, might marry freewomen upon payment of the basic bride price, and were protected by criminal law at half the rate of normal restituion.[88] Evidently a period of strenuous

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[84] Gurney, loc. cit.

[85] Sayce, op. cit., p. 71.

[86] Gurney, loc. cit.

[87] Sayce, op. cit., p. 72. Compare also Gurney, Ibid.

[88] Goetze, op. cit., p. 28.

social evolution was in progress, and it seems that slaves were enjoying increasing respectability.

Below the slaves in station were the pariahs, who were referred to as "shepherds" and "drawers of water"; marriage with such a man would bring temporary loss of status to his freeborn wife.[89]

Law

For social conditions prevailing in the Hittite state, the laws were especially illuminating and illustrated the spread of feudalism in Asia Minor. Tablet fragments from Boghazkoy contain a corpus of two hundred laws in two equally divided groups.[90] In these, notable areas of civil law (inheritance, adoption, contracts) are not covered which raises the probability that the evidence found is incomplete. The fragments discovered in different sections of the royal capital represent hand copies on clay used in various administrative offices or deposited in libraries or archives, and are comparable to the clay transcripts of the Babylonian code of Hammurabi.[91] The original text is dated to the Old Kingdom and has been attributed to Telepinus, whose talents as a lawgiver were evidenced by his edict. The discrepancies and inconsistencies of inner arrangement of subject matter would indicate that Hittite law was not a finished product of codification, but evolved according to

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[89] Ibid.

[90] Gurney, op. cit., p. 88.

[91] E. Neufeld. The Hittite Laws, translated into English and Hebrew with Commentary, (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, Ltd., 1951), p. 3.

the changing needs of society. Evidently the Hittites avoided the tendency towards stagnation inherent in the process of codification, and did not hesitate to reform their laws in accordance with these changing needs.[92]

In the regrettable absence of Hittite private documents, in contrast to their profusion in Mesopotamia, it is difficult to gauge the practical workings of the legal system. Probably the law was not uniform throughout the realm. In the villages the elders served as justices of the peace or as a peoples' court; in the code they were explicitly charged only with ruling on the ownership of stray cattle.[93] The king's military representative dispensed justice in the provinces in cooperation with local authority. An ultimate appeal to the king was possible in cases involving the death penalty.

In general, a spirit of respect for human life and dignity appeared to be evident, reflected especially in the penal regulation of criminal law. Restitution was the dominant means of redress. As in Mesopotamia, pre-meditated murder was still essentially extra-judicial, to be avenged by blood feud or dealt with privately at the discretion of the surviving kinsmen.[94] Other types of killing called for restitution in the form of persons (probably slaves, but also a son in place of a slain child),[95] but this was later replaced by monetary payment. The death penalty was

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[92] Gurney, loc.cit.

[93] Ibid., p. 92.

[94] Ibid., p. 99.

[95] Ibid.

used very sparingly, but was meted out for defiance of state authority, and in this instance included the wrongdoer's family, thereby evidencing a primitive notion of collective responsibility.

In civil law family organization was potently patriarchal, although certain paragraphs in the code dealt with a mother's right to disown her son, and her role of giving a daughter in marriage.[96] In general, however, the authority of the husband was absolute.

Economic Life

The central Anatolian high plateau, with its windy steppes and seasonal extremes of continental climate, was inhospitable to human habitation and vegetation alike.[97] Only the river valleys offered adequate irrigation and shelter and no doubt constituted the dominant locale of that which, according to the code, was a basically agrarian society. Economic documents complete the evidence derived from the laws which are themselves especially illuminating in describing economic conditions and the spread of feudalism to Asia Minor. The state had come more and more to depend on retainers of the king or the crown, to whom plots of land were distributed in exchange for the obligation to serve the king as soldiers or in working the royal domains.[98] The farms, whether owned

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[96] E. Neufeld. 'Notes on Hittite Laws', Archiv Orientalni, XVIII, p. 121.

[97] Gurney, op. cit., p. 80.

[98] Goetze, loc. cit.

by the cultivator or occupied by tenant farmers under lease from the crown, a feudal lord or a theoretically administered cult centre, were composed of plots subdivided into cultivated land, orchards, vineyards, meadows, pasture and woodland. Farmers were not allowed to move from town to town, but were shifted around by the authorities, presumably as the needs of the state required.

Stock was composed of the usual domestic animals: oxen for plowing, cattle, sheep, goats, pigs and mules. Bee-keeping was important to their economy,[99] and horse-breeding, specifically for military chariotry, was important as early as 1400 B.C.[100] Barley and emmer wheat were the chief crops used both for food and for brewing beer. The vine is thought to be indigenous in Anatolia, and was certainly extensively cultivated in Hittite times, but only certain more temperate coastal regions were hospitable to olive trees.

It would appear that agriculture and the produce of the soil were considered gifts from the gods.[101] In Babylonia, where the grain grew wild and the harvest was a gift of nature varying only in degree, the function of the consort to the Mother-goddess as a fertilizer had been a secondary consideration. In the prominence of manhood during the Hittite Empire, however, the god was considered gracious and gentle only to those who toiled upon the soil. The clearing of the ground, irrigation, plowing, sowing and constant tending were necessary before the god would bestow upon them a bountiful harvest, and it was in this

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[99] Gurney, op. cit., p. 81.

[100] Ceram, op. cit., p. 155.

[101] Garstang, op. cit., p. 360.

context that he was worshipped.[102]

People who acquired special skills were attached to the estates and devoted their time to manufacturing goods in a kind of home industry.[103] Their production satisfied the needs of the country, both military and civilian. Of particular importance was iron smelting. It seems that the technique of iron working was mastered during the Hittite period by a few skilled craftsmen who were able to charge a high price for their products, thus making such products an expensive rarity.[104] It is probable that the smelting was carried out by peasants in their homes during the winter season when there was no work to be done in the fields. If amutum in the Hittite texts has been correctly read and interpreted as the word for "iron", then in early Hittite times, iron was five times more expensive than gold, and forty times dearer than silver.[105] Although iron weapons were attempted, it appears that they were by no means of the quality of the stone and bronze weapons in use at the time.[106] Surplus produce was exported and the necessary materials not available in the country itself were imported.

Mineral-rich Anatolia was especially blessed with copper, making bronze the staple commercial metal. The abundant deposits of the Taurus

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[102] Ibid.

[103] Goetze, loc. cit.

[104] Ceram, op. cit., p. 212.

[105] Ibid.

[106] Ibid.

caused silver to become the standard currency of the realm.[107] Measured by weight in bars or rings, it was counted in units of sixty shekels to one mina. In the code list of prices, the value of a sheep was established at one shekel, and a sheep thus became an alternative fixed unit of monetary reference.

The civilization of the Hittites, with its feudalistic economy, was most advanced in those aspects which can be referred to the ruling caste, namely in military genius, political organization, legislation and the administration of justice. In general, it may be stated that in their ecological system, social organization and world view, the Hittites exhibited a certain refinement.

By the second millennium, B.C., they had already been a great power for several hundred years. During their period of domination, the Hittite kingdom represented a distinctly progressive social structure in spite of the fact that it was not united by a single religion.

The Hittite Empire was indeed a striking example of man in adaptation, and the processes by which he made effective use, for productive ends, of the energy potential of his habitat.

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[107] Gurney, op. cit., p. 82.

CHAPTER V

HITTITE PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES

Hittite political history consists of a continuous series of wars[1] and, as one might expect, warfare played an important social, economic, and political role in the survival of Hittite society. The majority of the physical activities of the Hittites had a militaristic leaning. Their empire, situated amongst bellicose neighbours and lacking natural frontiers, called for rulers whose power relied on strong armed forces. Every king, when he ascended the throne at first had to fight against aggressive enemies in order to keep the inherited territory intact, whereas later on, during his reign, he usually endeavoured to expand its borders.[2] The arms and the weapons used in the various parts of the Hittite Empire differed (Figures 1, 2 and 3). They testify not only to the gradual changes and improvements during the existence of the Empire and after its fall, but also to the fact that the empire consisted of various peoples and races united into one federal or feudal military power.[3]

The reports and monuments related to warfare are important, not only as sources for Hittite political history, but they also reveal the Hittite conception of war, and afford us a knowledge of the numerous

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[1] V. Korosec. "Warfare of the Hittites: From the Legal Point of View", Iraq, Vol. XXV (1963), p. 159.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Rostovtzeff, op. cit., p. 74.



Figure 1:



Figures 1, 2 and 3:

Hittite warriors. Note variation in battle dress and weapons from different parts of the Empire.



Figure 2:

Figure 3:

physical activities associated with it. The economic importance of warfare is revealed in the annals of the Hittite kings from as early as Hattusilis I, the real founder of the Old Kingdom. In his reports he attached the greatest importance to the acquisition of booty, which consisted of cattle, sheep as well as objects made of silver and gold.[4]

For the Hittite Empire, the oldest source is found in the Annals of Suppiluliumas, the greatest of the Hittite kings. His Annals, composed by his son Mursilis II, describe his numerous campaigns. Great stress is placed on the rich booty taken on behalf of the nobles of Hatti by the soldiers and by the chariot warriors,[5] and Mursilis writes of the deportees, cattle and sheep which were brought as booty to Hattusas.[6] When, in the booty, Mursilis found objects that perhaps in a previous war had been robbed from the Hittites, he restored them to their former owners.[7] In order to weaken his adversaries, Mursilis often ordered that their grain stores be confiscated or even burned.[8] Evidently, when wanting the necessary resources, he left his soldiers to search for grain and wine, and even to plunder the defeated city.[9]

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[4] Korosec, loc. cit.

[5] Korosec, op. cit., p. 163.

[6] H.G. Guterbock. "The Deeds of Suppiluliumas as Told by His Son, Mursilis II", Journal of Cuneiform Studies, Vol. 10, (1956), p. 60.

[7] Ibid., p. 78.

[8] Ibid., p. 84.

[9] Ibid.

Like Mursilis, Tudhaliyas IV was aware of the economic importance of warfare. In the treaty he concluded with Sausgamuwas of Amurru, this vassal had to assume the obligation that he would not permit either his own merchants to go to Assyria or Assyrian merchants to enter or pass through his country.[10]

On the other hand, according to a letter that has been found in the archives of Ugarit, Tudhaliyas IV, in the midst of a war with Assyria, received fifty minas of gold from the king of Ugarit, and in return released him from the obligation to furnish soldiers for the war in question.[11] Evidently the Hittite king was then in great financial difficulties.

The act of war was also closely connected with religion, and the Hittites often attributed military success to the support of their national deities.[12] Throughout the Annals of Mursilis II, numerous references are made to the gods:

> The enemy who had gone forth to (the town of) Anisa is now below (the town of) [...] - issa. (So) my father went against him. And the gods helped my father: The Sun Goddess of Arinna, the Storm God of Hatti, the Storm God of the Army, and the Lady of the Battlefield, (so that) he slew the aforementioned whole tribe and the enemy troops died in multitude.[13]

The religious significance of warfare is further attested by the negotiations between Mursilis and an Arzawa king. When the latter

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[10] Korosec, loc. cit.

[11] Guterbock, op. cit., p. 68.

[12] Gurney, op. cit., p. 158.

[13] Guterbock, op. cit., p. 75.

defected, Mursilis confronted him with a formal request to submit. When it was rejected he declared: "Let us fight them! May the Storm God my lord decide our lawsuit!"[14] In other words, the controversy which had arisen between the two parties was considered as a legal case, and one which was too complicated to be settled by the parties alone. It was, therefore, turned over to the gods to decide by ordeal.[15]

A defeat in battle was attributed to divine anger which had to be appeased. It is the only occasion at which human sacrifice was still practised;[16] the army had to march through a "gate" erected from sticks of wood and between the two halves of a sacrificed prisoner.[17] It was believed that the contamination which had made the army unfit to conquer the enemy could not pass such an obstacle and thus was left behind.[18]

Since all depended on the god's help, it was only natural that he shared in the booty that was brought home. Sometimes selected conquered territory was emptied of its inhabitants and consecrated to the gods.[19]

Some organizational rules concerning military service on the frontier in peace-time are found in the instructions for the chief of frontier territories.[20] They deal with such things as the custody of stocks

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[14] A. Goetze. "Warfare in Asia Minor", Iraq, Vol. XXV, Part 2, (1963), p. 126.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Guterbock, op. cit., p. 67.

[20] Korosec, op. cit., p. 65.

and the preservation of necessary buildings and they manifest the great sense that the Hittites had for law and order by ordinances.

In general, the warfare of the Hittites was in keeping with the grim methods that were usual at that time with all peoples of the Ancient Orient.[21] According to Mursilis II, conquered cities were destroyed and plundered.[22] Sometimes a curse was placed on occupied towns by the conquerors and anyone who attempted, in the future, to re-build the destroyed cities would do so at their own peril.[23]

A comparison of Hittite and Assyrian sources on warfare is possible for the last century of the Hittite Empire. The Assyrian king Shalmaneser I (1273 - 1244 B.C.), who was a contemporary of Hattusilis III and of Tudhaliyas IV boasted, in his annals, that he had slaughtered, like sheep, the army of the Hittites. Moreover he blinded 14,400 individuals.[24]

> One hundred and eighty of his cities I overturned to tells and ruins. The army of the Hittites and Ahlami (Arameans) his allies I slaughtered like sheep. With their corpses I filled the gorges and abysses of the mountains. On the sides of their city gate I amassed (in heaps) their corpses. Their cities I devastated, I destroyed, I transformed them into tells and clusters.[25]

On the contrary, massacres and mutilations are never mentioned in the Hittite sources. Suppiluliumas and Mursilis II confine themselves to

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[21] Ibid.

[22] Guterbock, op. cit., p. 83.

[23] Gurney, op. cit., p. 115.

[24] D.D. Luckenbill. Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia, Vol. 1, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1926), p. 38.

[25] Ibid.

the establishment of the fact that "the enemy troops died in multitude".[26] It seems, then, that one must agree with the observation of O.R. Gurney:

> There is complete absence of that lust for torture and cruelty which characterizes the annals of the Assyrian kings in their victories.[27]

There is a certain parallel between the evolution of the Hittite Law Code and the conception of warfare. For the early Hittite kings conquest and plunder was particularly severe,[28] but by the fourteenth century an evolution towards a general mitigation becomes evident. There had developed a closer intercourse between the civilized nations, and the Hittite kings at least made an effort to justify a declaration of war.[29] Mursilis II endeavoured to justify his numerous wars by indicating reasons for their outbreak. Those more prevalent included the punishment of a rebellious city; reaction to aggression by the adversary; or reprisal for the refusal of a previous Hittite demand for restitution of Hittite refugees.[30]

The art of fortification was highly developed in Asia Minor, as evidenced by the capital Hattusa - Boghazkoy. Two reasons can be adduced for this phenomena. Firstly, urbanization had come rather early to Anatolia.[31] The natural layout of the country did not favour

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[26] Guterbock, op. cit., p. 60.

[27] Korosec, op. cit., p. 167.

[28] Gurney, op. cit., p. 113.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Korosec, loc. cit.

[31] Goetze, op. cit., p. 127.

unification of urban centres into larger political units. On the contrary, the development was directed toward small units, and, in consequence, to rivalry between them. They had to be fortified to survive.

Then, secondly, came the introduction of the light chariot into warfare with all its consequences. Armies, fleeing from the chariots, sought protection in walled cities. This resulted in the development of siege warfare. Of Hittite siegecraft, little is known; but texts from Boghozkoy reveal advanced siege techniques at an early time employing a battering ram for use against a city wall by means of an earthen dam, presumably across a moat.[32]

The political success that the Hittites enjoyed, the very fact that they eventually established the most powerful state of the Near East, justifies the conclusion that they had mastered the military art to the fullest extent and that they had used every chance it offered to advantage.

Equestrian Pursuits

Perhaps the most lasting contribution of the Hittites to future societies was their domestication and training of the horse. Its employment can be dated from at least the beginning of the second millennium B.C.,[33] and within the ferment of nations at this time it was to lead to the development of something entirely new. Although contrary to the

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[32] Ibid.

[33] Garstang, op. cit., p. 320.

argument put forth by Oppenheim[34] in Chapter III, Garstang feels that the future of civilization in the Near East, and therefore the future of the world, had been revolutionized by a new and distinctly Hittite invention -- the light, horse-drawn chariot.[35] At some time during this period, in some place among the Hittites, Kassites, and the barbarian Hyksos, horse-training and breeding, the art of riding and this special form of chariot had been perfected.

It is known from the books of Kings[36] that horses and chariots were exported from Egypt for the Hittite princes, the Israelites serving as intermediaries in the trade. But they must have also obtained horses from the north and perhaps bred them.[37]

In the course of excavations in the soil of ancient Hattusas, archaeologists unearthed a text of some one thousand lines containing instructions on the breeding and training of horses. It abounds in technical jargon of Indo-Iranian origin and is certainly the oldest "handbook of equestrianism" that has come down to us. The man who wrote the manual identified himself as a certain 'Kikkuli' of the land of Mitanni, and it seems that a Hittite king hired a Hurrian breeder and trainer from the land of Mitanni to run the royal stables "on the most

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[34] Oppenheim, op. cit., p. 152.

[35] Garstang, loc. cit.

[36] Kings, XXVII, 14.

[37] Sayce, op. cit., p. 157.

modern principles".[38]

Although the Hurrians were considered the foremost horse breeders of their day, neither they not the Hittites can be considered the "inventors" of equestrianism,[39] particularly in view of the evidence presented by Oppenheim[40] on the origin and early domestication of the horse in Ancient Mesopotamia. Further, in contrast to Garstang, Sayce argues that since the effectiveness of the war chariot was dependent upon carefully trained horses, it is also fairly certain that the Hittites were not responsible for the development of this war machine.[41]

However, as evidenced in the texts their own training methods were particularly thorough, and the German hippologist, Gustov Rou, suggests that the text could still be used today.[42] Kikkulis manual goes into considerable detail, indicating that perhaps he was working within an ancient tradition.[43] The text is devoted chiefly to the preparation of horses for chariot races, and recommends a seven-month training period beginning in spring. Diem gives a rather detailed description of the training methods used.[44] From his description it seems that some semblance of a training track must have been laid out as a preliminary trot

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[38] Ceram, op. cit., p. 155.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Oppenheim, loc. cit.

[41] Sayce, op. cit., p. 156.

[42] Diem, op. cit., p. 106.

[43] Ceram, loc. cit.

[44] Diem, loc. cit.

of three "turnings" was recommended, a distance of approximately 32 kilometers, to be followed by a 1500 meter gallop. Various trials were given and during this early period, only small feedings were allowed in an attempt to break down the fat built up during the winter.

As the program progressed, the length of the training sessions and the work load were increased, and some of the training was carried out under cover. Intermittent rest periods of up to sixteen days were permitted.

After three weeks of rigorous training the horses were broken to the harness in preparation for introduction to the chariot. At first, short walks were taken each day for four days. Trotting was then commenced and, for the next ten days, ten kilometers a day were covered. This program was gradually intensified as the horse became quite accustomed to the chariot. After approximately 125 days gallops of 5000 meters were undertaken as final preparation for racing on a prepared racing circuit. The last stages of training were carried out on the actual racing track which was approximately 300 meters in length, and 200 meters in width. Diem states that the 170th day was the day of the race and that for six days prior to this only light training was undertaken.

During the entire period the diet of each animal was carefully observed. It would seem that even at this early stage of breeding and training, these people were familiar with diet deficiencies and, at regular stages in the program, the horses were given water containing salt and malt. After each training session stable hands would wash and

wipe down the horses before returning them to their stalls. Great care was taken in keeping a diary of the progress of each horse, and the recorded detail concerning their feeding, drinking and grooming is surprising, even by today's standards.

Besides chariot racing, riding was also important, and considerable attention has been paid to this in Kikkulis text.[45] Of course the horse must have been used for pleasure as well as a means of transportation in the every-day lives of the people. However, due to the importance of the military, the only representations of riders are decidedly militaristic, and those depicted in figures 4, 5 and 6, appear to be members of the Hittite cavalry. Even in this respect, the sources are not entirely adequate. Although Hittite cavalry are mentioned in the treaty with Ramses II and are depicted on the north wall at Karnak,[46] most writers insist that Hittite military forces did not employ cavalry.[47] [48] The newly domesticated horse was harnessed to the war chariot long before it was ever used as cavalry, although cavalry was ultimately invented by the peoples of the Near East.[49] Gurney states that mounted troops were, in fact, used as messengers.[50]

Both the simple halter and the full bridle were used. Figure 4

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[45] Ceram, loc. cit.

[46] Garstang, op. cit., p. 320.

[47] Ceram, op. cit., p. 156.

[48] Gurney, op. cit., p. 106.

[49] Ceram, loc. cit.

[50] Gurney, loc. cit.



Figures 4 and 5: Hittite cavalry.

Figure 4:



Figure 5:

illustrates the use of the halter, which appears to be wound around the lower jaw. The rider is seen with a round shield strapped to his right arm and holding what appears to be a lance in his left hand. Figure 5 illustrates the use of the bridle, with a true bit, and a cord or leather strap over the upper jaw. Also carried are the lance and shield, which do not seem to be in accordance with Gurney's theory of the mounted messenger. Rather, it would indicate that his task was of a military nature.

All representations reveal the lack of a saddle and stirrups and in one case (Figure 6) the rider is seen with his heels drawn up as though clutching the horse's side. Even to-day, the Bedouins usually ride on their plundering and war forays without a saddle, guiding the horse with only a simple halter, and nothing more than a long cord -- exactly as in the days of the Hittites.[51]

It would appear from other representations that riding was a popular pastime of royalty. In one case, an attendant-groom is shown with a bridled horse, as though awaiting his royal master's pleasure.

The only representation of tricks performed by horses was found as decoration on the top of a bronze rein-guide (Figure 7). It would seem that the horse was being taught to rear up and walk on its hind legs, and it is possible that such acts were used as entertainment for royalty and guests at the frequent palace banquets.

It is likely that the Hittite rein-guides were used in a similar

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[51] Oppenheim, op. cit., p. 98.



Figure 6: A mounted man.



Figure 7: A bronze rein-guide.

manner to those of the Sumerians.[52]

Chariotry

The introduction of the light horse-drawn chariot involved a fundamental change in the technique of warfare which is recognizable everywhere in the Near East circa 1650 B.C. It is the most characteristic feature of warfare of this period.[53] It must have been so new in its day that we are probably justified in calling it an invention. Its impact on warfare, specifically, and on the structure of society generally, can be observed nowhere better than among the Hittites.[54]

Various sculptures give an indication of the design of the new weapon, and where Hittite sources fail, the Egyptian carvings supply a wealth of detail. The materials used in the manufacturing of chariots point to the Ararat region as the place where the light chariot was, if not invented, certainly perfected.[55] This speedy and highly manoeuvrable "machine" which replaced the heavier Mesopotamian counterpart was probably introduced to the Hittites by the Indo-Iranian overlords of Mitanni.[56]

However, the significant thing from the point of view of warfare was not who discovered the chariot. Nor was it the improvement in its construction or the introduction of the horse to draw it. Certainly

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[52] For a description see p. 40.

[53] Goetze, op. cit., p. 124.

[54] Ibid.

[55] Ibid., p. 125.

[56] Gurney, op. cit., p. 104.

the chariot was now lighter, sturdier and more manoeuvrable. The horse, too,through controlled genetic breeding had been developed into a hardier strain. It was also more easily controlled and more reliable in the heat of battle. Each was a significant development in its own right. Nevertheless, the most notable achievement had been the combination of these two elements; to have a team so well trained that they could be put in front of the new war machine and make its military use possible. In this regard it was the Hittites who made the most significant progress.

The effectiveness of chariotry depended on its swiftness and manoeuvrability. The wheels of the light Hittite chariot were not solid discs as were those of its Sumerian counterpart, but were comprised of six spokes. In this regard they differed little in design from the Egyptian chariot except that the former was heavier and was designed to carry a crew of three (Figure 8). It had a decided advantage in battle as the function of attack and defence were differentiated.[57] Besides the chariot driver there was a chariot warrior who did the fighting, and a third man whose function it was to cover him with a shield as protection from enemy missiles.[58] [59] Further symbolic protection for the driver

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[57] Ibid., p. 106.

[58] Goetze, loc. cit.

[59] Representations of Hittite war chariots by Hittite artists often depict only two men to a chariot. This is perhaps to reduce the effect of overcrowding in the representation as the Hittite monuments are decidedly less sophisticated than those of Egyptian origin. Compare also Figure 8 and Figure 10.



Figure 8: Battle of Kadesh. Hittite chariotry charging a hill.

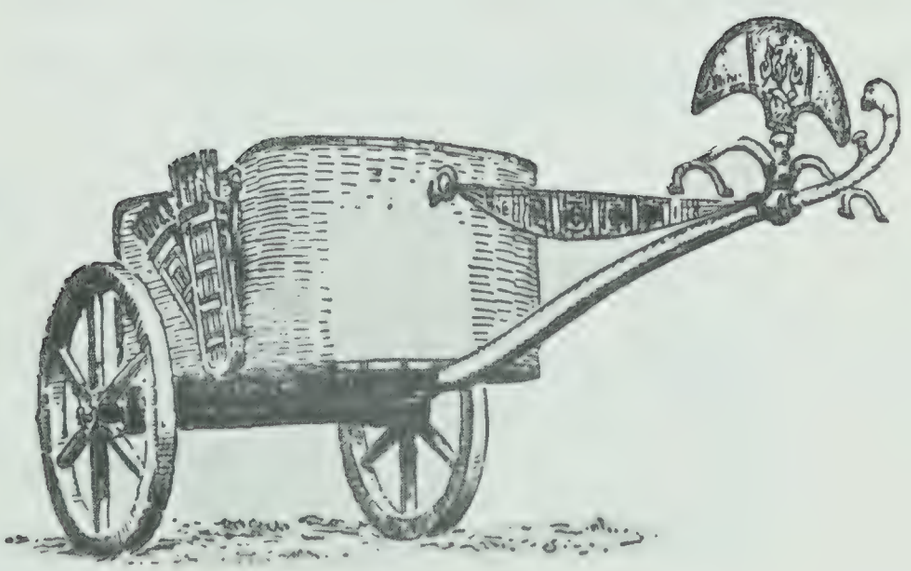


Figure 9: Reconstruction of a Hittite war chariot.

was afforded by the sickle-shaped ornament on the shaft of the vehicle (Figure 9). Made of embossed sheet copper it was designed to dazzle and frighten the enemy.[60]

Since the bow formed part of the chariot's standard equipment the charge of the chariot was preceded by a flight of arrows.[61] Figures 9 and 10 illustrate the two quivers slung on the side of the chariot car within easy reach of the chariot warrior. Once the charge was halted and fighting on foot followed, the Hittites, with their larger chariot crews, had the advantage of numbers. The remaining weapon of attack was the lance, which was carried slanting backwards, point upwards and rested at the back of the car [62] (Figure 10). Also shown is the curved shield slung at the back of the car and decorated with the lion's head (Figure 10) or the central spike (Figure 11).

It is suggested by Vieyra that the Assyrians adopted Hittite and Mitannian chariot equipment and warfare technique.[63] Evidence shows that Assurnasirpal II actually received a 'gorgeous' chariot[64] from Sangara of Carchemish, and that experienced Hittite charioteers were forced into the Assyrian forces.[65] Further, Assyrian chariots carried

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[60] Ceram, op. cit., p. 183.

[61] Goetze, loc. cit.

[62] M. Vieyra. Hittite Art - 2300 - 750 B.C., (London: Alec Tiranti, 1955), p. 46.

[63] Ibid., p. 47.

[64] Ibid.

[65] Ibid.



Figure 10:

Figures 10 and 11: Hittite war chariots. Note chariot weaponry.



Figure 11:

their weapons of attack in the same manner, and also bore the sickle-shaped ornament on the shaft. Such was the influence of the new Hittite chariot, which made speed the determining factor in battle.

Massed on the open battlefield, these chariots must have been an awesome sight to their enemies, the Egyptians, who have handed down vivid pictures of them taken from their wars. The assault on a hill (Figure 8), an incident in the battle of Kadesh, shows excellent formation in close order while advancing at a gallop. The Egyptians were unanimous in representing three Hittites in each car, a practice which differed from their own and so attracted their attention.

Their thunder, as the Bible tells us, also made the Syrians tremble:

> For the lord had made the host of the Syrians to hear the noise of chariots, and a noise of horses, even the noise of a great host: and they said one to another, "Lo, the King of Israel hath hired against us the kings of the Hittites and the kings of the Egyptians to come upon us".[66]

Here the Hittite kings are mentioned with the most powerful monarchs of the ancient world, the Egyptian Pharaohs, and in this instance are even given precedence over them. Ceram, too, aptly portrayed the battle scene when he wrote:

> And with this fantastic thing galloping wildly toward them, this unnatural horror compounded of whinnying beasts, shouting men, and glistening weapons, the firmest infantry front broke assunder. Even if the foot-soldiers withstood the first charge they soon found to their dismay that they had been surrounded, ringed in by the furious rush of the chariots. Showered with arrows, trampled by black hoofs, an infantry regiment

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[66] Kings II: 7, 6.

> could be transformed within a few minutes into a mass of frantic fleeing men. True some of the chariots might be scattered but the flying splinters would also inflict wounds. Horses could be pierced by spears but in their death struggles, they crushed warriors beneath their bodies.
>
> Sweat, the odor of horses and of blood, the biting desert dust, the screech of vultures, those scavengers of battle - such was, and ever has been, the panorama of the battle field.[67]

This technical innovation also had a considerable impact on the social structure of the times which proved to be even more significant than the technical progress itself.[68] The speedy chariot fighters, armed with spear and bow, relegated the infantry to secondary importance. It would seem that the rank of charioteer was highly regarded, being under the command and in the direct service of the king. One might well assume that it involved a certain intrinsic class consciousness. As a result of the disappearance of the most characteristic Hittite institution, the Pankus, the Empire appeared to conform more closely to the pattern of absolute monarchies, governing through officials appointed by the king. However, although the class from which these officials were drawn became gradually less exclusive, the wealthy nobility, as owners of the large estates, remained the dominant class.[69] It was they who could afford to pay for the specialized training and maintenance of the chariot teams, and for the chariots themselves.[70]

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[67] Ceram, op. cit., p. 157.

[68] A. Goetze. "State and Society of the Hittites", p. 29.

[69] Gurney, op. cit., p. 70.

[70] Goetze, loc. cit.

Further, one could perhaps assume that the chariots possessed by the nobles were a token of class distinction, as ownership would place one in direct contact with the king. Charioteers were highly trained technicians and were thus useless for any other purpose than war.[71] The need for constant training of horse and man created a class of professionals with its own ethos. Such men naturally were recruited from the higher strata of society and developed into a class of knights that had to be supported by the state.[72] One must assume, then, that the king endowed them with enough crown land to support not only themselves and their families, but also their horses and retainers.[73] Thus, the institutions of feudalism, including a division of labour and a class structure, although present before were now vastly expanded. In fact they became all-pervading and among the most important economic features of the period.

It would seem, then, that the charioteer class was under the supreme control of the king. Numerous references are made by Mursilis II in his annals, to the inspections of the chariotry carried out by the king.[74] The importance of these forces to the king in his campaigns is attested by the words of Mursilis himself:

> In the morning my father drove down from Tiwanzana into the country (while) in the rear his charioteers and six teams of horses were supporting him.[75]

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[71] A. Goetze. "Warfare in Asia Minor", p. 126.

[72] A. Goetze. "State and Society of the Hittites", p. 29.

[73] Gurney, op. cit., p. 70.

[74] Guterbock, op. cit., p. 117.

[75] Ibid., p. 76.



Figure 12: Hittite war chariot.

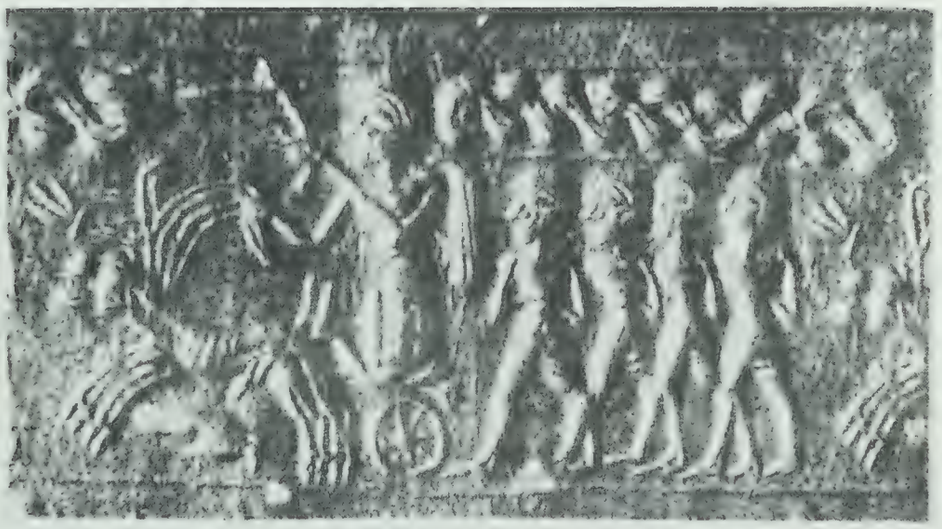


Figure 13: Cylinder seal depicting chariot scene.

Chariotry was considered so important that kings would accept horses and chariots as payment of tribute from defeated cities.[76] The expertise of the Hittite charioteers and trainers is exemplified by the fact that young, high-ranking Greeks were sometimes sent to Boghazkoy to learn the arts of riding and chariot driving.[77]

Although there were numerous representations of chariots in the war scenes depicted on Hittite monuments, no pictorial evidence of chariot racing has been found. The only literary evidence to be found is in the clay tablet text of the Hurrian horse trainer, Kikkuli, in which he refers to horses being prepared specifically for chariot racing. In spite of the lack of evidence, it is inconceivable that men who would pursue the specialized art of breeding and training horses as extensively as the Hittites would not have matched their carefully prepared mounts and chariots for speed. Perhaps as the relatively new science of Hittology develops, new evidence of this pastime will be unearthed.

Hunting

The large number of Hittite monuments devoted to hunting reveal not only that hunting was an important part of the lives of these people, but illustrates also the deep divisions between the social strata. One might assume from the large number of representations that hunting may have been necessary to supplement the meagre food supply in the

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[76] R.S. Hardy. "The Old Hittite Kingdom: A Political History", The American Journal of Semitic Languages, LVIII, (1941), p. 184.

[77] Diem, op. cit., p. 106.

harsh climate of the bleak Anatolian Plateau. This could, logically, have been the case with the peasant class.

However, it is obvious that hunting was pursued for the enjoyment of the upper classes, particularly royalty. The bow, most frequently used by the nobility, is often depicted in hunting scenes and it seems to have been one of their favourite hunting weapons.[78] The device is notable for its short length and long arrows which may have been ideal for use in the small, crowded car of the three-man battle chariot, or the two-man hunting chariot. The bow also had a religious significance for the Hittites and was used in conjunction with magic and primitive medicine.[79] It appears that it was used to cure the loss of sexual strength. The formula, which may have been a primitive attempt to combat homosexuality, worked equally well for men or women.[80] The ceremony, as cited by Burke, is as follows:

> The victim was clad in black garments from head to foot including plugs of black wool inserted in the ears. After a period of incantation by the officiating medicine man or woman the clothing was removed, the ear plugs were withdrawn and the nude patient was handed a spindle and made to pass through a ceremonial gate. When he emerged from the gate, the spindle was taken from his hand and he was given instead a strung war bow. The practitioner then spoke in ritual form, 'Behold, I have taken away from you womanhood and have given you back manhood. You have caste away the manners of women and have taken up the manners of men.[81]

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[78] E. Burke. The History of Archery, (Toronto: William Heinemann, 1958), p. 25.

[79] Ibid.

[80] Ibid., p. 26.

[81] Ibid.

Due to the great value placed on iron by the Hittites and to the wastage of arrows on a hunting expedition, it is unlikely that iron was used for arrow heads to any great extent by the lower classes. Instead, the flint stone was used, though the wooden shaft, simply sharpened and hardened over a flame, was perhaps favoured.[82]

Hunting from the chariot was, once again, the domain of royalty and the rich. The scenes depicting these daring escapades invariably portrayed the noble lion as the quarry. The archer stood upright in the swaying chariot while the horses raced to bring the hunter abreast of his game. It must have required a high degree of skill on the part of both the charioteer and the archer to make this form of sport a success. Hunting at this level may have had a religious, and certainly a royal, aspect. In Figure 14, the king or priest-dynast is marked out by a winged disc near his head.[83] Figure 15 illustrates an eagle flying towards the two occupants which is said to be the sun eagle watching over the hunter.[84]

Horses and men were clad in mail, and tassles hung from the sides and shoulders of the former. Undoubtedly, two horses were used, but in each case the artist, stubbornly carrying out the 'profile principle'[85] for pairs, always represents one member only. Moreover, the way the reins are managed also points to there being two horses.

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[82] Ibid., p. 28.

[83] Garstang, op. cit., p. 133.

[84] Oppenheim, op. cit., p. 151.

[85] Ibid.



Figure 14: A royal hunting scene.



Figure 15: Lion hunting from a chariot.

As with the war chariot, the car is small and open at the back; a quiver of arrows is hung on each side within easy reach of the archer (Figure 14), and a javelin extends, point upwards, from the back of the car. The tires of the wheels are quite thick and, in this case, have eight spokes. This undoubtedly was for extra strength, as rough terrain may have been encountered in pursuing an elusive quarry. The men in the chariot are clad exactly alike, in long mail robes with short sleeves. No head-gear is worn. The similarity of the figures is striking which led Garstang to suggest that perhaps it was the king's son who was driving.[86] He holds the reins in two hands -- one pair in each. In his right hand he grasps a short-stocked whip. The king is seen with his bow drawn, ready to release his arrow.

It would seem that when the lion had been disabled by the first few arrows, the king's attendants, who were likely following on horse-back or in other chariots, would make the kill. In this scene (Figure 14) one man, clad in a light tunic from the waist, can be seen thrusting a javelin into the lower back of the animal. The second man, clad more appropriately for this dangerous task in mail robe and helmet, thrusts his weapon into the skull or left shoulder of the lion. Figure 16, a detail from a lion-hunt scene, depicts a hunter about to throw his spear at the wounded beast. The method used appears similar to that used in javelin throwing to-day, with the implement released above the head. Burke suggests that, in the more dangerous hunts such as

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[86] Garstang, loc. cit.

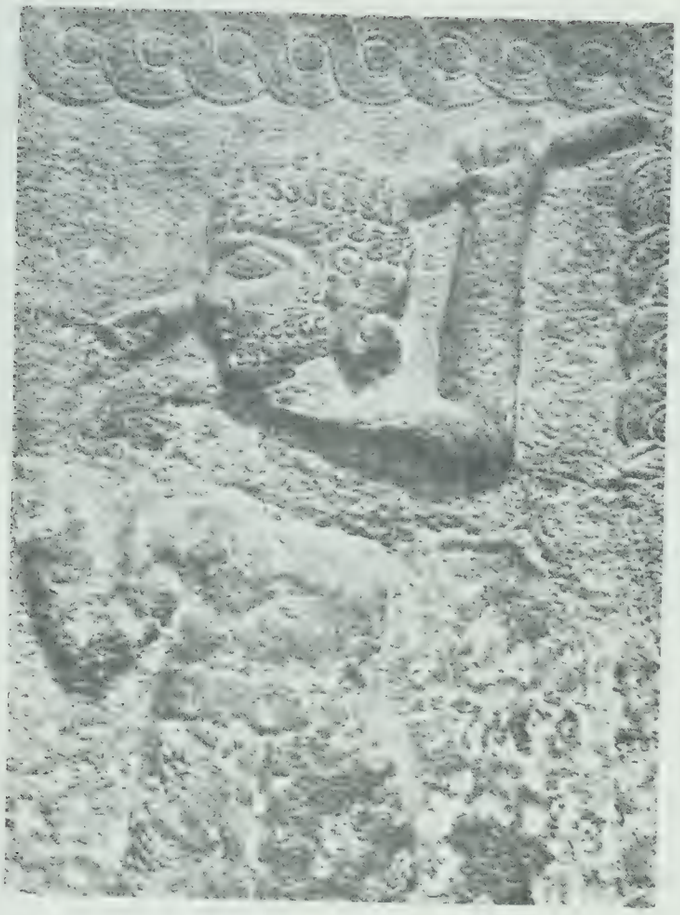


Figure 16: A hunter attacking a lion.



Figure 17: A hunter grappling with a lion.

these, the weapons would almost certainly be tipped with metal.[87] Occasionally, when lions were the quarry, the hunter became the hunted. He would be dragged from his chariot, or the galloping horses would be dragged down. Figure 17 depicts a hunter grappling with a lion in what could be the final moments of just such a situation.

Figure 18 illustrates yet another lion hunt, in which hunting hounds were used. The small chariot, again with driver and hunter, have overtaken and wounded the lion, which is seen clawing the air from the pain of the wound. The weapons are the bow and lance, the former being short and curved and the arrow strongly barbed. The arrow head in this case is almost certainly of iron. The hounds in this case were likely used to distract the beast while the kill was made (Figure 19). Here the artist has captured the frenzied efforts of the hounds as the king's lancer tries desperately to drive home his spear.

The lion was not the only large beast to fall victim to the Hittite hunter. In yet another scene (Figure 20) the hunter is following a wild bull, which due to limited space is represented running away over the horse in the reverse direction. In this instance, the guardian sun eagle is sitting above the head of the bowman, who wears the usual long protective robe and helmet.

Together with the bear and the stag (Figure 21 and 22), the elephant was also a prized hunting trophy. Although it is unlikely that they were hunted down and killed with the bow, such a catch would have required the assistance of many men and it is unusual that such a large

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[87] Burke, op. cit., p. 30.



Figure 18: Hunter and hounds attack lion.



Figure 19: While hounds distract the quarry the king's lancer completes the kill.





Figure 20: Bull-hunting from a chariot.



Figure 21: A bear hunt.

and important animal is not represented in the monuments unearthed to date. It is known that elephant tusks were among the tribute paid by the Hittites to the Assyrian kings, and it is said that the Hittites reclined on couches inlaid with ivory.[88] It is possible that the innovation of ivory inlay was an invention of the Hittites.[89] This, too, might be taken to imply that these people enjoyed a leisured existence. It may have been that the extinction of the elephant in this part of Asia was due to the indiscriminate killing of the Hittite huntsmen.[90] The sources also reveal that Anittas (c.a. 1940 B.C.) an early king of the Old Kingdom, considered hunting to have an important religious function. In connection with building and consecrating the temples, it would seem that after he had gone on a hunting expedition, during which lions, pigs, boars, bears and leopards were taken, he bestowed his kill on the gods.[91]

In the hunting scenes in which the bow appears, the artists have captured the great dexterity with which it was used. This is not only evident in the chariot scenes, but also in those depicting hunting on foot. The boar hunt (Figure 23) depicts the archer down on one knee about to shoot the charging beast; the left arm straight and the bowstring drawn back adjacent to the right ear.

Although small, the bows of the Hittites must have been unusually

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[88] Sayce, op. cit., p. 155.

[89] Ibid.

[90] Ibid.

[91] Hardy, op. cit., p. 184.



Figure 22: A stag hunt.



Figure 23: Stag and wild boar hunt.



strong to release their over-sized arrows with enough force to bring down a quarry as large as a lion or bull. Legend has it that Amenhotep II (1400 B.C.) had a bow of such power that no other man in the two kingdoms could string it, let alone loose an arrow from it.[92] If contemporaries of the Hittites knew the secrets of bow construction it is likely that the Hittites themselves were able to construct a weapon of comparable power.

Besides the bow and lance, the sling was also used in hunting. It is possible that these implements were used by those of peasant stock to bring down small game. Figure 25 depicts a slinger holding the missile in the pouch of his sling as he prepares to 'wind up' preparatory to the release.

No evidence has been found depicting any form of competition arising from the use of the bow, lance or sling. It is possible that, as warfare played such an important role in the lives of these people, any competition which arose in developing the skill for the efficient use of such weapons was considered incidental to the more important function of developing efficient warriors. If competition and games arose from their use, they must surely have been viewed as a means to an end. Therefore, the depicting of games on their monuments as ends in themselves was considered of little importance.

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[92] Burke, op. cit., p. 29.



Figure 24: Archer



Figure 25: Slinger

Falconry

Representations of falconry are clearly connected with the upper classes. Figure 26 depicts two attendants in the palace, or personal servants of the king,[93] for they are clad alike and carry in their hands objects for the king's use. The leader holds in his right hand what seems to be a throwing stick. The second figure holds a bird carved like a vulture, but from its size and the general nature of the subject, it must be taken for a falcon.[94] In his left hand, the falconer holds the "lure" to which a bell or similar object was attached. This, the hunter threw after the bird to attract it to return. It seems, then, that the sport of falconry was known to the Hittites, and this illustration depicts what could have been an early training period in which the lure was still a necessary item in bringing out the bird's natural instinct for attack. Figure 27 shows the scribe Tarhunpijas, stylus in hand and holding a hunting hawk.

Festivals

The people of the Empire (circa 1450-1200 B.C.) certainly led a rich religious life which must have involved numerous festivals.[95] Mursilis II related in his annals how his father, Suppiluliumas, postponed a campaign in order to return to the Hittite capital to be present

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[93] Garstang, op. cit., p. 307.

[94] Ibid.

[95] Gurney, op. cit., pp. 151-156.



Figure 26: Palace personnel holding hunting hawk and throwing stick.



Figure 27: The scribe Tarhunpijas holding a hunting hawk.



on such an occasion.[96] It is likely that on this, as on other occasions, an effort was made to appease the gods after the loss of an important battle, or perhaps to flatter them as thanksgiving for a victory in battle or for a rich and bountiful harvest just completed.

Certainly the neighbouring tribes had to be kept in check, but warfare was now a seasonal affair.[97] Campaigns began in spring and were suspended during the inclement part of the year. This procedure had the additional advantage that during the interval between campaigns the king could attend to his administrative duties and, above all, see to it that the festivals of the gods were properly celebrated. After all, the help of the gods was always needed to make a military operation a success.[98]

What with the intimate connection between warfare and kingship, and between kingship and religion, it is in no way surprising that religious ceremonies accompanied all war-like actions. Festival rituals and oracle questions are the kinds of texts which form by far the greatest part of all Hittite tablets.[99]

It is strange, however, that in spite of the obvious importance of religious festivals during the Empire, no scenes of festivals and related activities appear on their monuments until after its fall (circa 1200 B.C.). It seems likely that the Hittites were able to pursue a

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[96] Guterbock, op. cit., p. 86.

[97] Goetze, op. cit., p. 127.

[98] Ibid.

[99] Guterbock, op. cit., p. 95.

rich and festive life to the full only after the burden of keeping the Empire in order was lifted from their shoulders circa 1190 B.C. The art after that date reflects a leisured people who were left in relative peace.

Many of the religious feasts are mentioned in the texts and are often named after the seasons of the year. Most are performed by the king or by the king and queen, others by the queen or royal prince alone.[100] Each cult centre had its own festival calendar, but in most cases details are unknown. The rituals of most of these festivals seem to have been essentially similar so that one may almost speak of a single "royal ritual".[101]

The course of a normal feast would begin with the king purifying himself by washing.[102] After putting on his robes and ornaments in a special building the king, often accompanied by the queen, would enter the courtyard of the temple, where certain rites, such as further hand washing, were performed. He would then enter the temple room proper, where he poured libations to the holy parts of the room such as the offering table, the hearth, the throne, the window and the door bolt. After seating himself, his royal insignia were brought in and placed near him. The main part of the ceremony was a meal: a table was brought into the room and put before the king and, to the accompaniment of music, he broke bread and drank to the gods.[103] The term used for this latter

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[100] Oppenheim, op. cit., p. 96.

[101] Gurney, op. cit., p. 153.

[102] This description is taken from Guterbock, "Forgotten Religions", p. 69.

[103] Ibid.

performance is difficult to understand. Verbally it means "the king drinks the god".[104] This has been explained as "gives the god to drink" or "drinks in honour of the god" or even in a mystical sense of drinking the god and so becoming united with him.[105] However this may be, it seems clear that the king was drinking wine or beer, and this involves a libation of some kind. The ceremonial meal was ended by another hand washing.

In addition to the king and queen, an audience is mentioned. The participants, including different classes of officials, were shown to their places by a herald, "the Bearer of the Staff".[106] In some cases the texts speak of a "great assembly",[107] evidently a greater number of people forming the audience of the feast, among whom parts of the meal were distributed.

The most common form of entertainment at these feasts appears to be music and dancing, although jesters, acrobats, wrestling, boxing and even animal acts may have been popular.

Music and Dancing

After glancing at the surviving art work depicting Hittite musical scenes, one cannot help but wonder at the number and variety of the

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[104] Oppenheim, loc. cit.

[105] Ibid.

[106] Guterbock, loc. cit.

[107] Ibid.

instruments illustrated. They may be divided into three categories: idiophonic instruments which vibrated without any special tension and included concussion clubs, clappers, drums and cymbals; wind instruments such as pipes, horns and trumpets; and, stringed instruments such as the lute, lyre and harp.

A large selection of these instruments are illustrated in Figure 28, depicting King Asitawanda partaking of a festive meal at a banquet. Below the main scene, servants lead in an ox and a lamb for the banquet, while the musicians play upon the cymbals, harp, lyre and clappers. The lyre they use is very similar to that found in the early Greek culture circa 700 B.C. and E. Akurgal even suggests that Terpander of Lesbos, who lived at the beginning of the seventh century B.C., may have fashioned his lyre of seven strings on such oriental models.[108]

In yet another banquet scene (Figure 29) in the style of the cultic and funerary representations,[109] a bearded figure holds a cup and is attended by a servant with a fly whisk. To the right is a second attendant and a musician who plays upon a string instrument.

The curved horn and drum are illustrated in Figure 30. It is possible that from the shape of the horn it may have been made from the horn of a bullock of ox and was, perhaps, plated with gold as they were by the Sumerians. To the right, a drum is carried by one man as two musicians beat upon it with their open hands. The man on the extreme

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[108] E. Akurgal and M. Hirmer. The Art of the Hittites, (New York: H.N. Abrams, Inc.), p. 142.

[109] Pritchard, op. cit., p. 209.

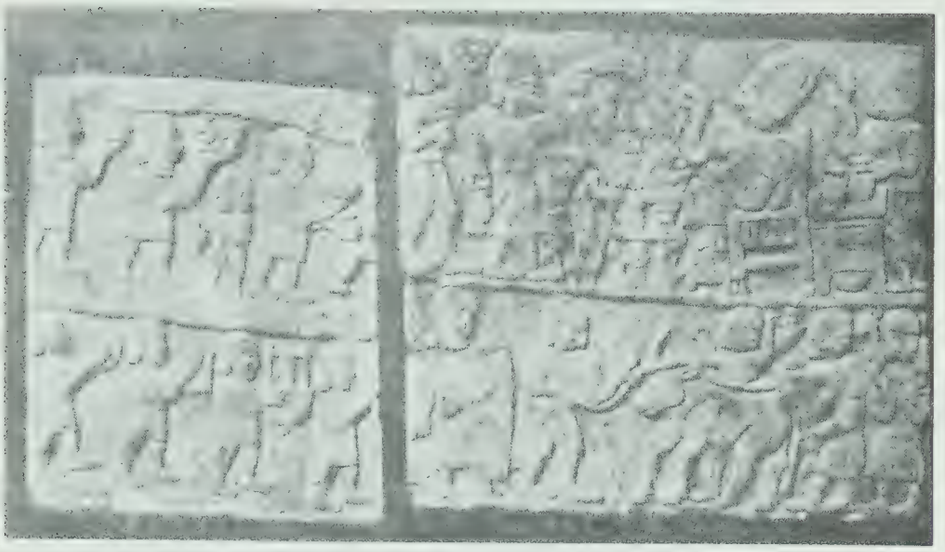


Figure 28: Banquet of King Asitawandas.



Figure 29: Festive meal accompanied by music from a stringed instrument.

right seems to have a strap about his neck which helps to support the instrument.

One most unusual instrument is depicted in Figure 31. It is held by the figure on the right and seems to be an inflated skin into which he is clearly blowing. One must suspect a drone effect similar to that of the bag pipes, the invariable accompaniment of oriental music. Garstang suggests that the bag pipe consisted of the skin of a dog, the insufflation pipe being at the tail end, while the drone pipe was probably concealed within the dog's head with the vent through its mouth.[110] The same idea, he says, was carried out in the Middle Ages in Europe.[111]

The accompanying musician (Figure 31) plays an instrument which is different again: it is a fine specimen of a guitar, the strings of which were plucked by the fingers. The guitar is attached by a cord to the waist belt and is decorated with loose ribbons which flutter from the end.

The representations of dancing are all connected to the religious rituals and ceremonial feasts. Gurney relates a ritual in which are mentioned 'jesters' playing the arkammi, the huhupal and the galgalturi, three musical instruments, while other 'jesters' hold up their hands

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[110] Garstang, loc. cit.

[111] Compare with Aristophones Achannians (1.866), 'you flute players who are here from Thebes blow the dogs tail with your bone pipes.' (Extract from a letter from Miss K. Schlesinger as cited in Garstang, Ibid.)



Figure 30: Musicians playing drum and curved horn.



Figure 31: Early forms of the guitar and bagpipes.

and turn round in their places[112] (Figure 32). The text captures the excitement of the moment as the "Master of Ceremonies" orders the singers and dancers to pick up their Ishtar - instruments and take up their positions.

Figure 33 again illustrates the use of the lute, double pipes and clappers as accompaniment to the dancer on the right.

A unique ceremony was enacted, apparently in the autumn at the Hittite city of Gursamassa in honour of the god Yarris, in which not only singing and feasting took place, but also play acting:[113]

> The young men are divided into two groups and receive names; the one group they call "Men of Hatti", the other group "Men of Masa", and the men of Hatti carry weapons of copper, but the men of Masa carry weapons of reed. They fight with each other and the men of Hatti win; and they seize a captive and devote him to the god.[114]

It has been suggested that this mock battle may perpetuate an historical battle which took place in the vicinity, but such ritual combats are not uncommon in folklore.[115]

Acrobatics

Other scenes (Figures 34 and 35) illustrate the various novelty acts which seem also to have been an important aspect of the entertainment at the ceremonial feast. Garstang suggests that perhaps they were

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[112] Gurney, op. cit., p. 154.

[113] Ibid.

[114] As cited in Gurney, op. cit., p. 155.

[115] Ibid.



Figure 32: Relief showing musicians and dancer.



Figure 33: Man dancing to music of clappers, pipe and lute.



performed during religious ceremonies which involved animal sacrifices.[116] Figure 34 depicts two men going through what may be interpreted as a balancing act. One man is balancing on his partner's shoulders and both accompany their movements by beating with their bare hands upon cymbals or tambourines.

The second figure (Figure 35) in this section is rather more difficult to interpret. It is one of four stones of a series depicting dancers and musicians. On the right are two small figures, one of whom is shown mounting a ladder which rises obliquely from the ground level, while the other holds his arms in a manner which suggests a throwing action. The third figure to the left, and seemingly detached from those behind him, holds an object to his mouth. Akurgal has obviously viewed the scenes on the four connected stones as one complete scene and has interpreted these figures as jugglers and acrobats,[117] an interpretation which is in keeping with the air of merriment depicted on the other three. The figure on the ladder Akurgal believes to be an acrobat performing a balancing act; the second a juggler; and the third a sword swallower.

Garstang views the two smaller figures on the right as separate from the rest, and suggests that an interpretation such as that given by Akurgal is an unnecessary complication.[118] He explains that the figure on the extreme right is not holding the ladder to climb higher.

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[116] Garstang, op. cit., p. 295.

[117] Akurgal, op. cit., p. 93.

[118] Garstang, loc. cit.

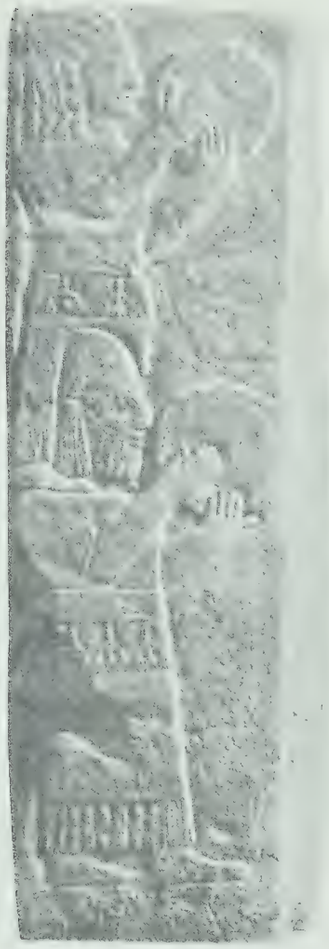


Figure 34: Acrobats accompanying their performance with the rhythmical beat of cymbals.



Figure 35: The controversial acrobat, juggler and sword-swallower.



In his right hand Garstang sees a rounded implement with which he is striking a blow, and suggests that perhaps he is using a chisel and mason's hammer to dress the wall face. This was commonly done after the blocks had been fitted, and it seems that the completion of the last course of stones was commemorated by the sculpture. If Garstang's interpretation is correct, it seems strange that the artist would spoil the continuity of his story in stone by introducing a ritual that was completely out of context with the apparently related representations.

It is evident that the Hittites were fond of a leisured life, and all that it afforded them. Music, dancing, singing, play acting and even acrobatics were all art forms that befitted a people to whom wealth had given leisure. The cultivation of these arts was obviously important enough for royalty and the moneyed classes to represent them on their monuments.

A curious indication of this leisured life style is exemplified in the small monkey seen gathering scraps under the king's table (Figure 28) already referred to. It suggests a relaxed atmosphere, indicating that the banquet possibly did not take place at the palace at Karatepe, but rather at the king's summer residence.[119] Only those who enjoyed the quiet of a peaceful and wealthy life would have gratified the taste for animals which the monuments reveal by importing an animal like the monkey from the distant south.

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[119] Akurgal, op. cit., p. 142.



Figure 36: Lion-trainer with performing lions.

Animal Training

With the domestication and training of the horse it seems likely that some attempt was made at training more exotic animals such as the bear and members of the cat family. Figure 36 depicts what could be interpreted as an animal trainer rehearsing a sequence of movements with what Akurgal describes as two bears. One might discount his interpretation, as the long tails and broad snouts indicate that the animals were lions.

This suggests that lions and perhaps other large wild animals were hunted not only for the purpose of killing, but to be brought back to the cities where they were to perform at the king's pleasure. Such a venture would once again, require the cooperation of many men using specialized equipment. It is also possible that some of these animals were kept caged and released at a later date for the royal hunt.

Boxing and Wrestling

It appears that even boxing and wrestling may have been used as entertainment spectacles at palace banquets and, in this regard, the scenes depicted on Hittite cylinder seals are particularly enlightening. Figure 37, although primitive in its representation, depicts two men opposed, the one of the left with arms raised in the 'on guard' position. Figure 38, slightly clearer, depicts two men locked in combat. They appear to be nude except for a loin cloth around the waist. A third figure is seen beyond them and to the left. It seems reasonable to assume that his task was to referee the bout in progress.



Figure 37:

Figures 37 and 38: Cylinder seals depicting boxing matches.



Figure 38:

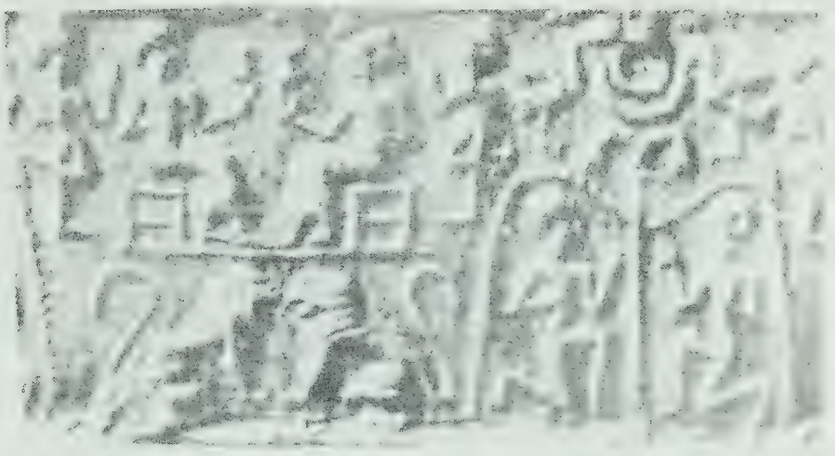


Figure 39: Cylinder seal depicting wrestling as entertainment at a banquet.

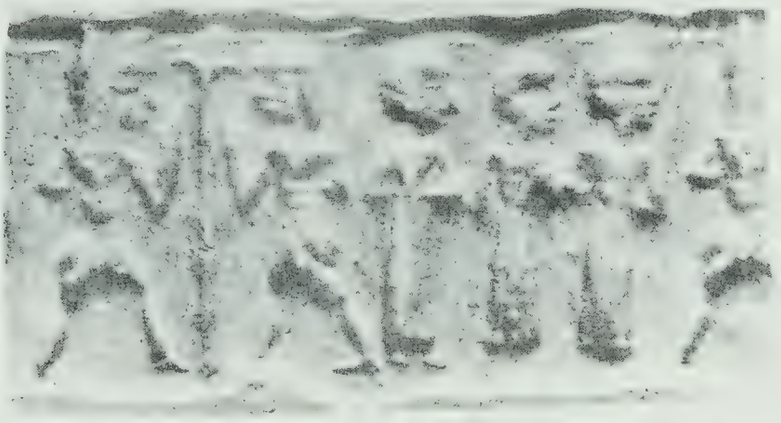


Figure 40: Two figures engaged in pole wrestling.

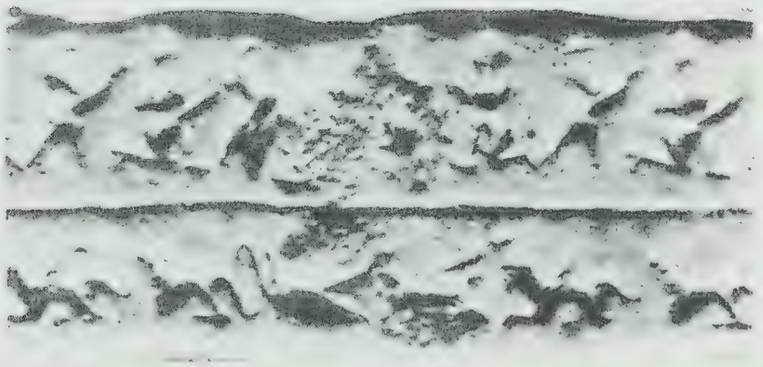


Figure 41: Upper register - two groups of kneeling men opposed.

Wrestling bouts appear to have been fought with both opponents in a kneeling position, an example of which is depicted in Figure 39. Two female figures are shown seated, drinking a beverage from the cups they are holding. Behind each of the seated figures is a second figure shown in the cross-legged position, perhaps dancing. Below and to the right are two opposed, nude figures. They appear to be involved in a wrestling match which may have begun in the kneeling position. In this case, the contest seems to be taking place under an awning or canopy and around the centre supporting pole. Figure 40 again illustrates two opposed figures in belted loin cloths, this time standing and again fighting around a pole. An audience is suggested by the three figures to the right. In both examples it appears that the pole had to be held with one hand while attempting to bring down the opponent with the free hand.

Armed Combat

Several examples of armed combatants have been found, which suggest that perhaps some form of gladiatorial combat did take place. Although the examples are again rather crudely drawn, it is possible to make out, in Figure 42, two opponents, only one of whom is armed. Figure 43 also illustrates two combatants struggling against each other. They appear to have something between them; it may be a shield held by one of the contestants or perhaps a tether holding the two together to ensure the best possible exhibition for an audience. However, this is merely conjecture and these two illustrations may only be depicting the hand-to-hand

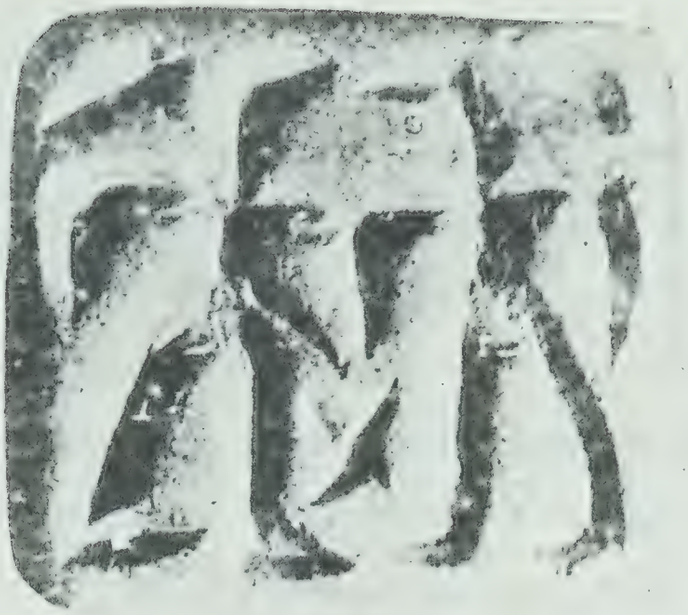


Figure 42:

Figures 42 and 43: Figures opposed in armed combat.



Figure 43:

combat so common on the battle-field at that time.

In addition to its probable use as entertainment for the king and persons of the upper class, it is possible that these competitions were devised as a means of practising for battle situations. This suggests a form of gladiatorial school, so prevalent in ancient Rome, in which blunt weapons and various combat techniques were devised and taught. If the assumption is correct and such schools existed during the Hittite Empire and New Kingdom, it would discount the theory of gladiatorial combat originating among the Etruscans and Samnites.[120] Unfortunately, there is no evidence to substantiate this theory, but perhaps in the future further evidence will be unearthed.

Boating

The Hittites were a continental power. From the central Anatolian Plateau they expanded, and King Labarnas boasts that he made the sea the border of his land;[121] the same certainly happened again during the Empire period.[122] Nevertheless, Hittite kings never ventured out onto the sea and one might say they appear to have been at a disadvantage as soon as they reached the coast. They had no fleet and what ships were used for intercourse with the island of Cyprus, which the Hittites appear to have controlled, is unknown.[123] The lack of a navy contributed

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[120] See W. Bishop. "The Role of Physical Activities in Ancient Rome", unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of Alberta, 1970, p. 61.

[121] Goetze, op. cit., p. 127.

[122] Ibid.

[123] Gurney, op. cit., p. 106.

greatly to their downfall. We have seen their prowess in land battles, for which they were well prepared, but it seems that an invasion from the sea was hardly considered likely. Their lack of naval experience prevented them from mastering the assault which finally came from the invading "Sea Peoples".

However, one can be certain that they knew how to build small craft for lake and river transport. The only representation found is to be seen in Figure 44. It is a boat-shaped rhyton decorated at the front with a ram's head. An oarsman is to be seen inside the craft.

Swimming

No evidence has been found of the Hittites pursuing swimming as a recreational activity, but the art was certainly known to them and employed as an essential part of warfare. Figures 45, 46 and 47 illustrate Hittite soldiers swimming to escape from the Egyptian and Assyrian armies. Figure 45, a scene from the battle of Kadesh, shows a town surrounded by water, together with Hittite lancers, horses, and charioteers. To the upper right is the town of Kadesh, represented as though it were in the middle of the river. Below are rows of Hittite lancers marching toward the river in which swim horses and charioteers who have escaped the Egyptian onslaught on the other side. Some are being pulled ashore by their comrades.

Figure 46, again from the battle of Kadesh, illustrates three different strokes with which the Hittites must have been familiar: a form of front crawl, back stroke and side stroke. On the right, two Hittite



Figure 44: Boat-shaped rhyton with oarsman.

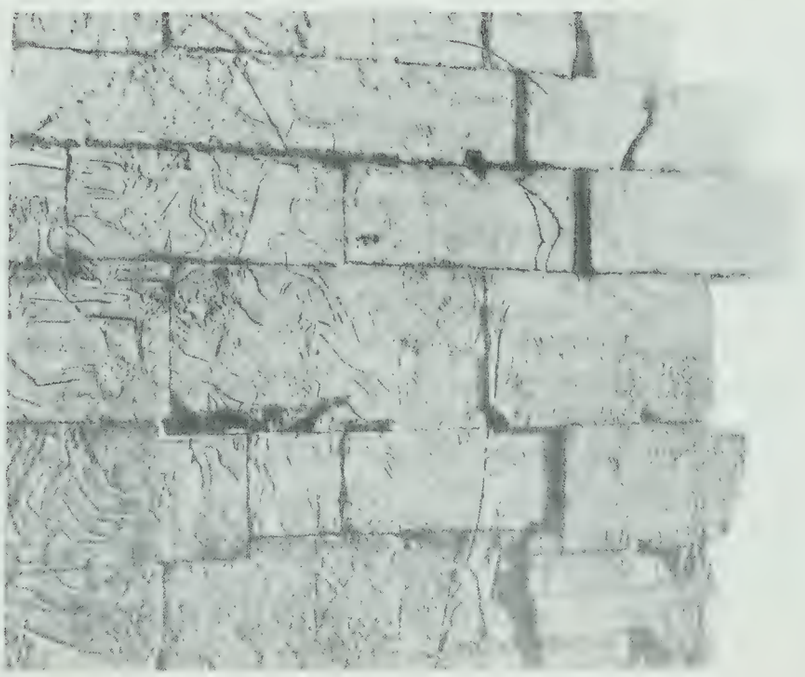


Figure 45: Scene from the Battle of Kadesh depicting fleeing Hittite swimmers.

soldiers are performing a method of artificial respiration on one of their comrades.

It seems that swimming aids were also known to the Hittites. Inflated skins (Figure 47) were used as floats on which the swimmer lay, holding the skins with one hand and stroking with the other. In this illustration both feet of each swimmer can be seen, one above the other. This suggests that a form of "flutter" kick was used as in the modern crawl stroke. Visible in this illustration is a tube protruding from the upper end of the float and held in the swimmer's mouth. It is possible that these aids were carried on the warrior's person, inflated prior to entering the water and kept inflated via the tube. With the weight of the swimmer's body, the float probably emitted some air through the stitched seams, and the tube may have been used to replace the lost air with each expiration of the frantic, fleeing swimmer.

Each of the illustrations depict swimming as a means of escape, and a very necessary skill in view of the fact that many of the larger fortified cities seem to have been surrounded by water. As swimming was so important in this respect, the Hittites must surely have practised the art until near perfection. The use of the float as an aid in swimming any great distance was, in itself, a difficult skill and long hours must have been spent in learning a correct breathing technique in order to keep it inflated. The mere fact that different strokes were experimented with indicates further that long hours must have been spent in the water perfecting them.

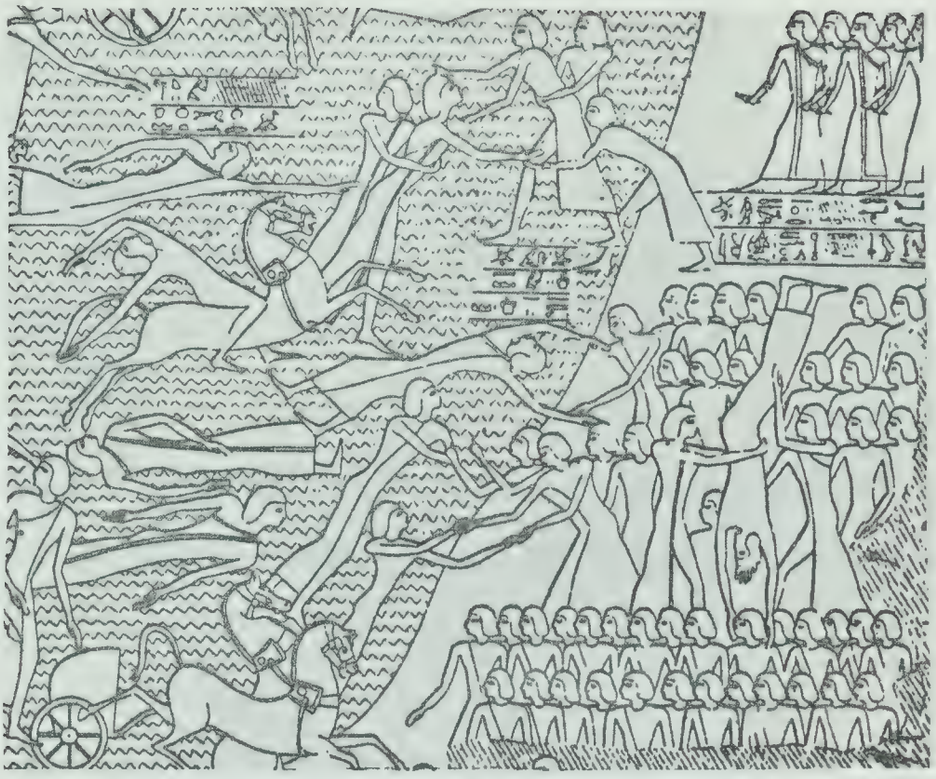


Figure 46: The use of crawl, back-stroke and side-stroke at the Battle of Kadesh.



Figure 47: Hittite swimmers escaping from Assyrian bowmen.

Games

Little evidence has been found related to games of the Hittite civilization. One example, a stone which was one of several depicting aspects of everyday life at the palace, shows King Araras embracing his eldest son and successor, Kamanas, as he introduces him to the dignitaries and nobles of his realm.[124] While this custom is being carried out, the king's younger children (Figure 48) are shown playing with a number of small objects which Akurgal describes as dice. They appear to be moving objects on the board between them. However, it is more likely that they were, in fact, knuckle bones, as the figure on the left is seen trying to manipulate a large number of them. Mellink refers to knucklebones as a common offering throughout antiquity and apparently continued in use as a funeral present of children in modern villages.[125] The Hittite villages of Alisar and Kultepe furnish evidence for the popularity of knucklebones as toys in these Hittite communities.[126]

Excavations in the inner city of Carchemish have unearthed a number of animal figurines.[127] In a single house nine horses were found and the figurines were generally so numerous that it was felt that they could not have had any religious significance but must have been toys

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[124] Akurgal, op. cit., p. 133.

[125] J.M. Mellink. A Hittite Cemetery at Gordion, (Philadelphia: The University Museum, University of Pennsylvania, 1956), p. 42.

[126] Ibid.

[127] L. Woolley. Carchemish Report on the Excavations at Jerablus on Behalf of the British Museum, Part III, Trustees of the British Museum, London (1952), p. 257.



Figure 48: The children of King Araras playing in the palace courtyard with tops and knuckle-bones.

or "pieces" in some sort of game.[128] All figurines, animal and human alike, were in what Woolley calls the "snow-man" technique all having broad, flat bases and it is possible that these broad-based objects could have been used in a board game which may have been a refinement of Sumerian "chess."

Further evidence of children's games is to be found in a faience stamp seal of the button type, found in a Hittite cemetery at Gordion.[129] It is alleged that, as this particular seal could hardly have served as an identification mark, it must have belonged to a child and served instead as a play object.[130]

Summary

In the monuments described in the preceding section, the impression gained of these people is one of a vigorous and resourceful race. While reviewing their physical activities several important characteristics should be considered. First, no scenes from the early Hittite period have, to date, been unearthed. It is likely, however, that as with the Sumerian civilization, the period immediately after their entry into Asia Minor was one of adaptation to a new environment and adjustment to numerous bellicose tribes in the neighbouring areas. Certainly they were involved in frequent and vicious skirmishes and one might assume

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[128] Ibid.

[129] Mellink, loc. cit.

[130] Ibid.

therefore, that even in this early period their physical activities were predominantly war-like in nature.

Second, as new migrating races poured across the Hittite borders circa 1190 B.C., and as the Assyrian menace grew steadily, the new and more sophisticated art of this and later periods depicted a second wave of war-like activity, more serious than the seasonal campaigns of the interim period.

The contrast between the art of the Empire and Neo Hittite period is particularly noticeable; the latter reflects a leisured class of people, a people who had earlier swept into the region and conquered, had grown wealthy at the expense of their subordinate neighbours, and had been, by this time, subdued by more powerful forces. Chariots, which had been brought to near perfection through the long period of war and struggle for dominance, were now used, not for warfare but for hunting and perhaps racing. Leisure time activities were now pursued with as much vigor and interest as the campaigns of the past. Although greatly subdued, their spirit was not broken. This is evidenced by the liveliness of the hunting and festival scenes, so prevalent in this period, which reflect a vitality rivaling that of the Empire Period.

The number and variety of novelty acts, seemingly an integral part of the festivals illustrates not only the existence of leisure time, but also a particular craving to fill it. A growing urban centre will always bring with it a class structure and a division of labour, and along with the development of a class of skilled artisans -- smiths, carpenters and stone-masons -- one finds the emergence of a number of

professional groups who devoted their lives to this leisured cause. The large variety of musical instruments suggested that much time was spent not only in perfecting those already in existence, but in developing new instruments. A curious example is to be seen in the primitive bagpipe (Figure 31) developed, no doubt, in an attempt to produce a wider range of sounds. Similarly, the guitar and lute involved the earliest use of strings over a sound box and this probably represented an attempt to produce a much more resonant sound than was formally achieved in the earlier instruments where the strings were inserted into the box. Certainly the development of such instruments would require experimentation implying in turn the existence of skilled musicians, formerly noted in the Sumerian culture, many of whom spent their lives in the service of the king, entertaining at palace banquets or even playing in the city square or market place.

In addition to professional musicians and dancers, the evidence suggested that a class of professional wrestlers and boxers, as well as acrobats emerged, perhaps in response to the demand for a greater variety of entertainment spectacles for the adult citizenry.

Nor were the children complacent when it came to games. They seemed to enjoy playing with jacks, dice, tops, and perhaps board games as much as children of today. Conspicuous by their absence, however, are monuments depicting gymnastic exercises so prevalent in Greek and Roman art. Once again one may assume that physical activities in this civilization were pursued not as an end in themselves but as a means to an end. So preoccupied were they in the game of war, and later in the sheer

enjoyment of life, that it seems the idea of exercising for physical well being alone had not occurred to them; or if it had, perhaps it was not so vital to them that they would depict these activities on their monuments.

Their way of life was certainly in keeping with Ceram's description of the Hittites as being lovers of "wine, women and song".[131] Of this period of Hittite history he wrote:

> ...we received an impression of the luxuriant formlessness of this late Hittite culture, this surviving provincial culture of a great empire. Lumped together without the slightest logical or artistic connection were sculptures of men and animals, heraldic groups, processions,genre pictures, representations of gods, ritualistic scenes, pictures of hunts on water and land, scenes of music making and dancing, and finally a chariot and boat side by side.[132]

Implicit in this statement is an indication of the vitality and reckless abandon with which the Hittites made use of their new found freedom in their pursuance of a life of leisure.

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[131] Ceram, op. cit., p. 213.

[132] Ibid., p. 239.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The primary purpose of this study was to examine the physical and recreational activities of the Sumerian and Hittite civilizations and to determine their uses relative to one or more of the social and cultural institutions.

Two hypotheses were examined in the study: first, that the preponderance of physical activities of the Sumerians and Hittites were associated with warfare; and second, that the physical activities of the Sumerians and Hittites were predominantly activities of the upper classes.

In an exploratory study of this nature in which a marked reliance is placed upon primitive art, it is only possible to draw tenuous conclusions. The evidence would tend to support the first hypothesis, that most physical activities of both civilizations were related directly or indirectly to the improvement of the efficiency of a fighting force in the field.

In ancient societies, little control over the environment was possible; there was always a heavy reliance on the people to defend and preserve one's ecological niche and in an area where the political situation was liable to errupt and the balance of power likely to change at any moment, it is not surprizing that the physical activities assumed a highly practical nature, and that life should revolve around warfare and its related activities.

Physical exercises tended to be associated with vocational training in the life of the farmer, the artisan, the hunter and the warrior, and to be of value only as they served practical aims. Activities such as chariotry, equestrianism, archery and swimming were first learned for their practical use in battle rather than for the pleasure they might give the participants. Certainly the members of the phalanx, infantry and chariot crews sought prowess in battle and in the chase, and practised diligently to maintain this prowess when the need arose. However, the aims were basically utilitarian.

In support of the hypothesis that the physical activities of these people were predominantly those of the upper classes, the archaeological evidence unearthed to date would seem to generally confirm this. It must be re-emphasized, however, that the evidence is incomplete. The physical activities strongly denoted a strict formality which was by no means evident for the lower classes, and in the majority of the chariot and hunting scenes one sees the image of the king constantly glorified as he led his troops into battle or rushed into the hunt. He is always shown at the table in banquet scenes and evidence of leisure time for him was implicit in the elaborate gaming boards found in the royal graves at Ur.

There was no evidence to support the contention that training in exercises existed for the masses of the people other than that developed in their daily work. Public celebrations such as those held on the triumphal return of a king gave some expression to a spirit of merriment in music, dancing and feasting, but generally speaking opportunities for

extensive recreation for the lower classes appeared to be quite rare.

Such is the impression gained from the surviving art forms, but this must not be taken to mean that those of the lower classes did not enjoy any recreation whatsoever. It is unfortunate that royalty at this period of history demanded such overwhelming attention. The activities related thereto were prevalent to the extreme and certainly such representation was to the exclusion of those pursued by the lower classes. Consequently, the picture of everyday life in the Sumerian and Hittite Empires is incomplete and must remain so until further evidence is unearthed. In the meantime, one must accept the conclusions derived from the biased representations presented in this study.

Recommendations

Throughout the study the prevalence of religion and its connection with almost all the activities described was most noticeable. It would seem that a thorough study of this institution and its effect on the games and pastimes of these people -- indeed, all ancient peoples -- would perhaps throw more light on the place of physical activities within these cultures.

However, due to its intangible character, the realm of their world view is least directly observable. Perhaps a study of the games having a religious aspect would provide a better understanding of that institution and in so doing, develop a more accurate understanding of the world of these people and the methods by which they navigated through it.

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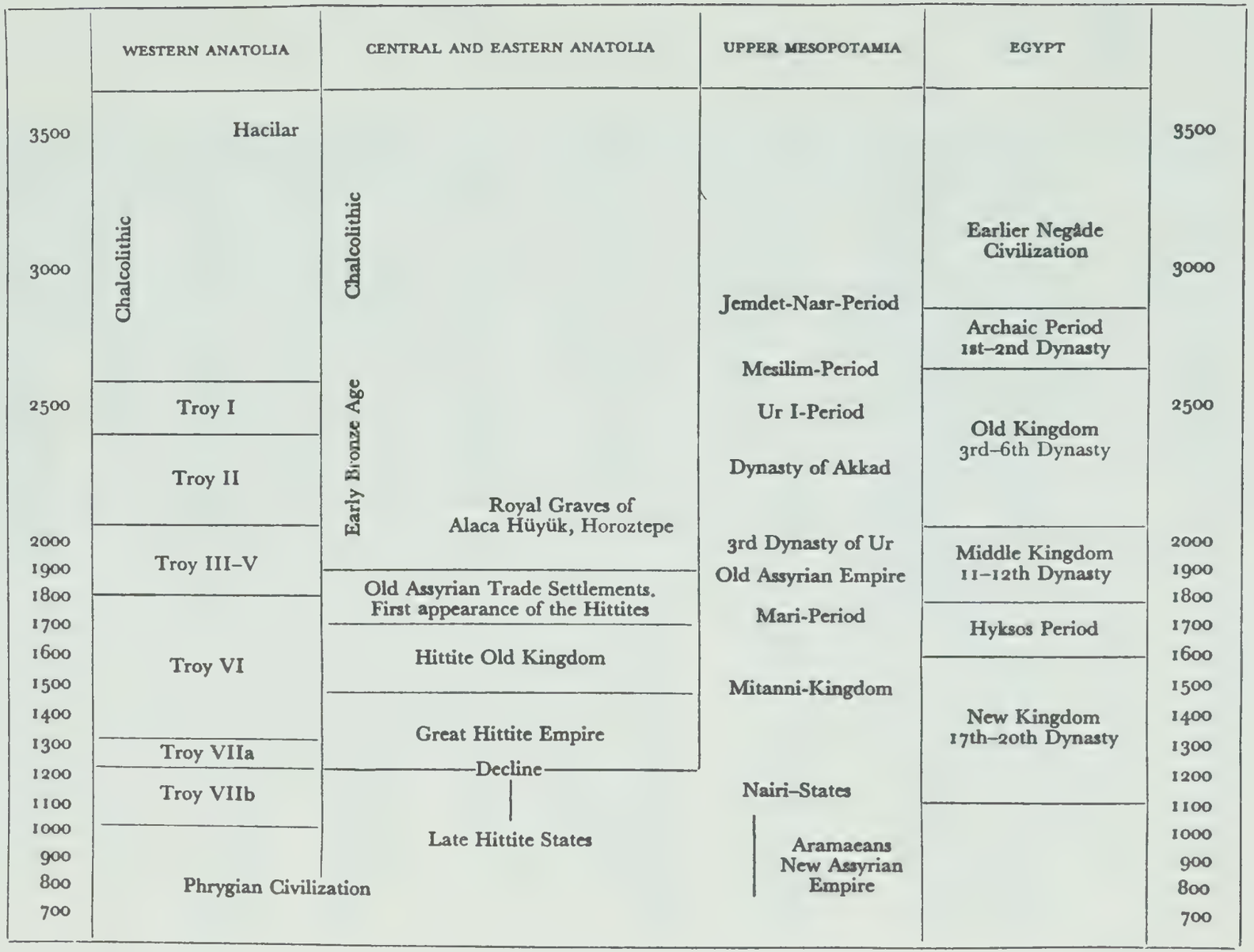
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APPENDIX



Map of the Ancient Near East Showing Hittite and Sumerian Sites.



The Ancient Near East. Comparative Table.

ILLUSTRATIONS

DETAILS AND SOURCES

SUMERIAN

FIGURE

1 Telloh. Stele of the Vultures. The upper register shows Eannatum leading his troops over enemy bodies. In the lower register the soldiers are shown marching in close formation carrying axes and spears. Again they are led by Eannatum who rides in his chariot. First half of the third millennium B.C. Louvre Museum, Paris.
Source: Parrot, op. cit., fig. 164, p. 135.

2 Diyala Region. A small figure plaque showing a peasant riding a humped ox. Early second millennium B.C. Oriental Institute, Chicago.
Source: Ibid., fig. 360, p. 293.

3 Ur. The "war panel" from the "Standard of Ur" depicting the triumph of the king over his enemies. First half of the third millennium B.C. British Museum, London.
Source: Pritchard, op. cit., fig. 303, p. 97.

4 A war chariot carrying a driver, chariot warrior, and wounded comrade. Painting by Frederico Castellon.
Source: "The Epic of Man", op. cit., p. 67.

5 Ur. A fragment of a limestone plaque showing a two-wheeled chariot drawn by four asses. Middle of the third millennium B.C. University Museum, Philadelphia.
Source: Pritchard, op. cit., fig. 163, p. 50.

6 Tell 'Agrab. A copper quadriga. First half of third millennium. Baghdad, Iraq Museum.
Source: Strommenger, op. cit., plate 48.

7 A Sumerian rein-ring.
Source: Iraq, vol. X, part 1, p. 51.

8 Ur. A cylinder seal depicting Gilgamesh and Enkidu fighting wild animals. Second half of the third millennium B.C.
Source: Parrot, op. cit., fig. 242, p. 193.

FIGURE

9 Warka. The lion-hunt stele. Early third millennium B.C. Baghdad, Iraq Museum.
Source: Ibid., fig. 92, p. 75.

10 Ur. A cylinder seal depicting a court banquet. The upper register shows drinking and the lower depicts musicians and dancers. Middle of the third millennium. University Museum, Philadelphia.
Source: Pritchard, op. cit., fig. 679, p. 220.

11 Ur. Cylinder seal depicting banquet scene in a boat. University Museum, Philadelphia.
Source: Ibid., fig. 197, p. 165.

12 Ur. Celebration of a victory with music and feasting, on the "peace panel" from the "Standard of Ur". First half of the third millennium B.C. British Museum, London.
Source: Ibid., fig. 304, p. 97.

13 Nippur. Terra-cotta figurine of woman playing a double pipe. University Museum, Philadelphia.
Source: Ibid., fig. 195, p. 62.

14 Ur. Fragments of silver pipes found at Ur. Twenty-fifth century B.C. University Museum, Philadelphia.
Source: Ibid., fig. 198, p. 62.

15 A gigantic Sumerian war drum -- su gu galli, 'the great bull's hide'. University Museum, Philadelphia.
Source: Sachs, op. cit., plate IV.

16 Telloh. Detail of a vase showing musicians with a drum. Twenty-second century B.C. Louvre Museum, Paris.
Source: Parrot, op. cit., fig. 286, p. 233.

17 Ur. Reconstructed lyre with a sound-box ending in a gold bull's head. Twenty-fifth century. Baghdad, Iraq Museum.
Source: Pritchard, op. cit., fig. 193, p. 61.

18 An original silver Sumerian lyre. University Museum, Philadelphia.
Source: Sachs, op. cit., plate III.

19 Telloh. A fragment showing an eleven stringed lyre. Beginning of the twenty-first century B.C. Louvre Museum, Paris.
Source: Pritchard, loc. cit., fig. 191.

FIGURE

20 Mari. Ur-Nina, 'The Great Singer'. First half of the third millennium B.C. Damascus Museum.
Source: Parrot, op. cit., fig. 155, p. 126.

21 Telloh. Bronze pinhead of two small dancing women. First half of the third millennium. Louvre Museum, Paris.
Source: J.C. Margueron. Mesopotamia, trans. H.S.B. Harrison (London: Frederick Muller Limited, 1965), plate 9.

22 Diyala Region (?). Fragment of a limestone votive plaque depicting a boxing match. First half of the third millennium B.C. Baghdad, Iraq Museum.
Source: Strommenger, op. cit., plate 46.

23 Khafaje. Limestone votive plaque depicting boxing and wrestling matches. First half of the third millennium B.C. Baghdad, Iraq Museum.
Source: Ibid.

24 Khafaje. Bronze statuette of two wrestlers supporting vases. First part of the third millennium. Baghdad, Iraq Museum.
Source: Ibid., plate 48.

25 Telloh. Cylinder seal depicting combat against wild animals. Twenty-second - twenty-first centuries B.C. Louvre Museum, Paris.
Source: Parrot, op. cit., fig. 310, p. 249.

26 Warka. A Sumerian cylinder seal showing two men attempting to subdue and tie a bull. Circa 3000 B.C. British Museum, London.
Source: Larousse Encyclopedia of Ancient and Medieval History, (New York and Evanston: Harper and Row, 1963), p. 48.

27 Ur. A silver model of a boat found in the vaulted tomb of the "King's grave" at Ur. Twenty-fifth century B.C. Baghdad, Iraq Museum.
Source: Pritchard, op. cit., fig. 105, p. 31.

28 Fara. A fragment of a relief showing two figures propelling a boat with oars or paddles. Early third millennium B.C. Berlin Museum.
Source: Ibid., fig. 103, p. 31.

FIGURE

29 Ur. Inlaid gaming-boards with the "men" and dice found in a grave at Ur. Twenty-fifth century. British Museum, London.
Source: L. Woolley. Ur of the Chaldees, (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1965), p. 22.

30 Ur. Chequer-board from the "royal" tombs at Ur. Middle of the third millennium. University Museum, Philadelphia.
Source: Margueron, op. cit., plate 55.

31 Telloh. A fragment from the "Stele of the Vultures" depicting enemy warriors held in a net. Middle of the third millennium B.C. Louvre Museum, Paris.
Source: Pritchard, op. cit., fig. 298, p. 94.

32 Ivory chessman (Rook), the top of which closely resembles the front panel of a Sumerian chariot. Twelfth century A.D.
Source: Iraq, vol. VIII, 1946, plate VIII.

33 Ur. Detail of a war charriot from the Standard of Ur, illustrating the front panel on which the twelfth century A.D. ivory rook was modelled. First half of the third millennium. British Museum, London.
Source: Parrot, op. cit., fig. 175, p. 146.

34 Terra-cotta model of a Sumerian chariot.
Source: Iraq, vol. VIII, 1946, plate VIII.

35 & 36 Tell-Halaf. Gaming-board of white marble having a strong resemblance to those found in the graves at Ur.
Source: Iraq, vol. VIII, 1946, plate VIII.

37 Susa. Fragment of what may have been a victory stele, showing a large net containing prisoners. Circa 2360-2180 B.C. Louvre Museum, Paris.
Source: Pritchard, op. cit., fig. 307, p. 98.

HITTITE

FIGURE

1 Sinjerli. Hittite warrior holding a lance in his right hand and a shield in the left; through his belt is thrust a long sword. Ninth century. Berlin Museum.
Source: Pritchard, op. cit., fig. 36, p. 13.

2 Boghaz-Koy. The warrior at the King's gate. Through his girdle is thrust a sword with a curved point and in his right hand he holds a four-pronged battle-axe. Fourteenth century. Ankara Museum.
Source: Ibid., fig. 38, p. 13.

3 Carchemish. Two Hittite soldiers carrying shields and spears. Ninth-eighth century. Ankara Museum.
Source: Ibid., fig. 37, p. 13.

4 Tell-Halaf. A cavalryman astride a prancing horse is armed with a shield, having a boss and a bound rim, and a club or sword. Ninth century. Berlin Museum.
Source: Ibid., fig. 164, p. 50.

5 Tell-Halaf. A rider. British Museum.
Source: Vieyra, op. cit., plate 95.

6 Sinjerli. Relief of a mounted man. Berlin Museum.
Source: Ceram, op. cit., plate X.

7 Boghaz-Koy. A bronze rein guide. Louvre Museum.
Source: Vieyra, op. cit., plate 116.

8 Battle of Kadesh. Hittite chariotry charging a hill. Temple of Rameses II at Abydos.
Source: Garstang, op. cit., plate LXXXVIII opp., p. 344.

9 Reconstruction of a Hittite war chariot.
Source: Ceram, op. cit., p. 183.

10 Sinjerli. In a chariot stand a bowman with drawn bow and a spear behind, and a driver, who holds a whip in one hand and reins in the other. The chariot has two six-spoked wheels and is decorated with a lion's head at the back. Eighth century, Istanbul, Museum of the Ancient Orient.
Source: Vieyra, op. cit., plate 77.

FIGURE

11 Carchemish. Battle chariot 850-700 B.C. Assyrian influence. Ankara Museum.
Source: Ibid., plate 48.

12 Tell-Halaf. A warrior and charioteer stand in a chariot with six-spoked wheels, usually drawn by two horses. Beneath the horse is the prostrate nude body of an enemy. Ninth century. Aleppo, National Museum.
Source: Pritchard, op. cit., fig. 165, p. 50.

13 Cylinder seal depicting chariot drawn by two horses with palace personnel in attendance.
Source: Hogarth, D.G. Hittite Seals with particular reference to the Ashmolean Collection, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1920), plate 167.

14 Sakji-Geuzi. Royal hunting scene. Circa eighth century B.C.
Source: Garstang, op. cit., plate XXXIX opp., p. 104.

15 Tell-Halaf. Lion hunting from a chariot.
Source: Oppenheim, op. cit., plate XIXA, p. 150.

16 Sakji-Geuzi. Hunter attaching a lion. Second half of the eighth century B.C. Aramaean influence Ankara Museum.
Source: Akurgal and Hirmer, op. cit., plate 133.

17 Tell-Halaf. Lion killer.
Source: Oppenheim, op. cit., plate XXIB, p. 158.

18 Malatya. The lion hunt, 850-700 B.C. Assyrian influence. Ankara Museum.
Source: Vieyra, op. cit., plate 67.

19 Alaca Hüyük. Lion hunt relief from the city walls. Ankara Museum.
Source: Akurgal and Hirmer, op. cit., plate 96.

20 Tell-Halaf. Bull-hunting from a chariot.
Source: Oppenheim, op. cit., plate XIXB, p. 150.

21 Karatepe. Bear hunt. Circa 700 B.C. Aramaean influence.
Source: Akurgal and Hirmer, op. cit., plate 147.

22 Malatya. The stag hunt. Circa ninth century B.C. Louvre Museum.
Source: Vieyra, op. cit., plate 66.

FIGURE

23 Alaca Hüyük. Stag and wild boar hunt. Ankara Museum.
Source: Ibid., plate 34.

24 Tell-Halaf. Archer. British Museum.
Source: Vieyra, op. cit., plate 97.

25 Tell-Halaf. Slinger. British Museum.
Source: Ibid., plate 96.

26 Sakji-Geuzi. Palace personnel holding hunting hawk and throwing stick.
Source: Garstang, op. cit., plate LXXXI opp., p. 306.

27 Marash. The scribe Tarhunpijas holding a hunting hawk. Eighth century B.C. Louvre Museum.
Source: Vieyra, op. cit., plate 72.

28 Karatepe. The banquet of King Asitawandas. Circa 700 B.C. Aramaean influence.
Source: Ibid., plate 107.

29 Carchemish. Banquet scene: bearded figure sits before the table with his attendants. Second half of the eighth century. Ankara Museum.
Source: Pritchard, op. cit., fig. 637, p. 209.

30 Carchemish. Horn and drum played by musicians. Ninth-eighth century. Ankara Museum.
Source: Ibid., fig. 201, p. 63.

31 Alaca Hüyük. Musicians with bagpipe and guitar. Ankara Museum.
Source: Garstang, op. cit., plate LXXIII opp., p. 260.

32 Karatepe. Relief showing musicians and dancer.
Source: Gurney, op. cit., plate 29.

33 Carchemish. Man dancing to music of clappers, pipe and lute. Ninth-eighth century. Ankara Museum.
Source: Vieyra, op. cit., plate 53.

34 Sinjerli. Acrobats.
Source: H. Frankfort. The Art and Architecture of the Ancient Orient, (Baltimore: Penguin Books Ltd., 1955).

FIGURE

35 Alaca Hüyük. Relief from the city walls of jugglers and acrobats. Ankara Museum.
Source: Akurgal and Hirmer, op. cit., plate 93.

36 Karatepe. Dancing lions with trainer. Circa 700 B.C. Aramaean influence.
Source: Ibid., plate 146.

37 & 38 Cylinder seals depicting boxing matches.
Source: Hogarth, op. cit., plates 77 & 78.

39 - 41 Cylinder seals depicting wrestling scenes.
Source: Ibid., plates 153, 174, 41.

42 & 43 Cylinder seals depicting armed combat.
Source: Ibid., plates 50 & 51.

44 Kültepe. Boat-shaped rhyton with ram's head and oarsman. Nineteenth-eighteenth century B.C. Ankara Museum.
Source: Akurgal and Hirmer, op. cit., plate 32.

45 Battle of Kadesh on the second pylon of the Ramesseum. Hittite lancers are marching toward the river, in which swim horses and charioteers who have escaped the Egyptian onslaught.
Source: Pritchard, op. cit., fig. 337, p. 113.

46 The Ramesseum. A scene from the reliefs of the battle of Kadesh showing Hittite soldiers fleeing across the river. The King Aleppo is being held upside down in an attempt to revive him.
Source: Breasted, op. cit., fig. 160.

47 A portion of an Assyrian relief showing Hittite soldiers escaping from Assyrian bowmen. British Museum.
Source: Diem, op. cit., fig. 73, p. 106.

48 Carchemish. The children of King Araras playing with dice or knuckle-bones and a top. Second half of the eighth century. Ankara Museum.
Source: Vieyra, op. cit., plate 37.

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